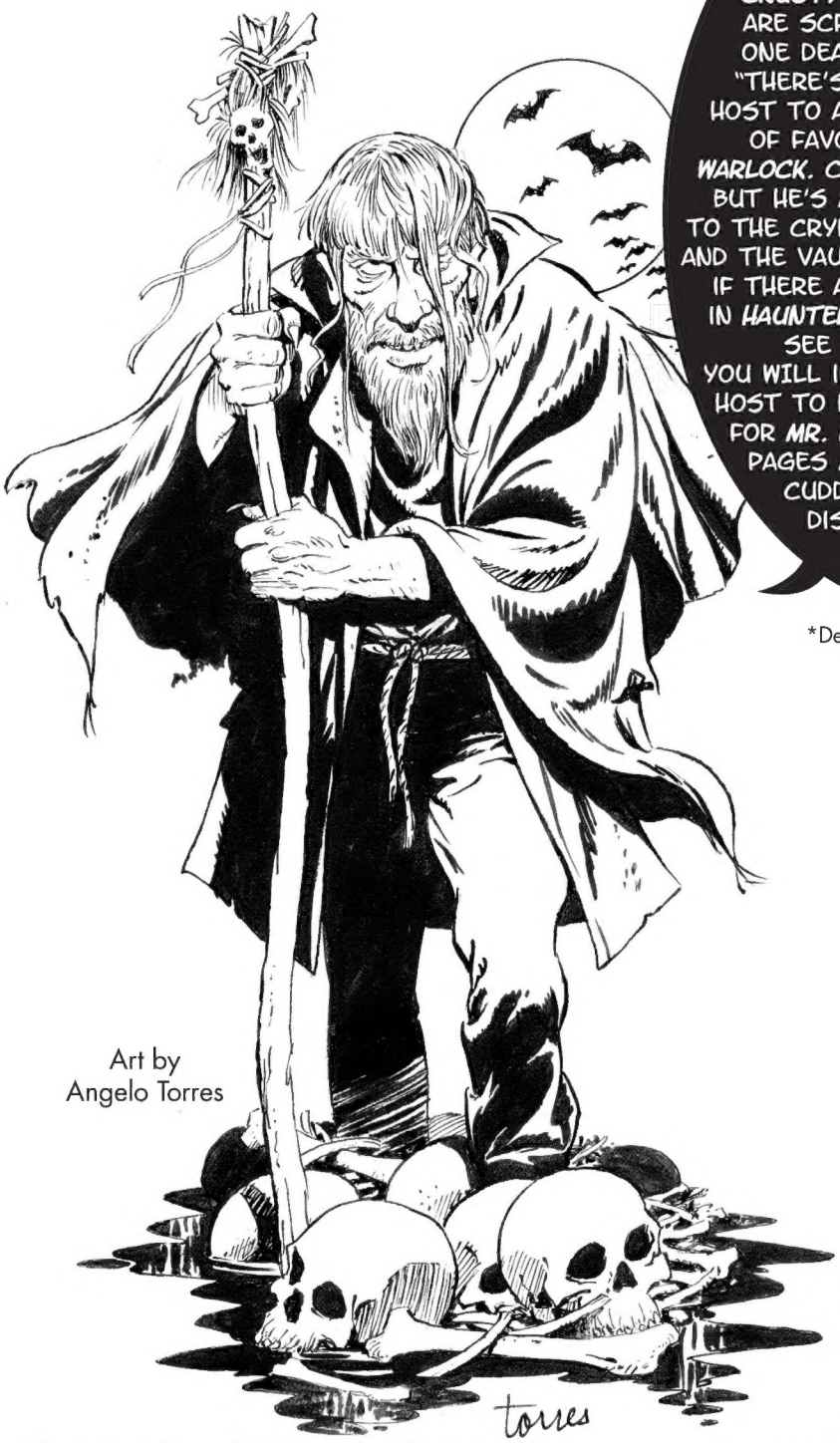
THE CHILLING ARCHIVES OF HORROR COMICS!™
YOE COMICS
FORELOCK the WARLOCK
HAUNTED HORROR™
#2

FORELOCK THE WARLOCK



Art by
Angelo Torres

MY NEW *FUNNY BOOK* IS A FEARSOME HIT WITH YOU, *FIENDISH FANS!* EVEN THE *CRUSTY CURMUDGEON CRITICS* ARE SCREAMING WITH DELIGHT! ONE DEATH-RATTLER RATTLES, "THERE'S A BRAND-NEW SPECIAL HOST TO ADD TO YOUR COLLECTION OF FAVORITES: *FORELOCK THE WARLOCK*. CUTE AND CUDDLY HE AIN'T, BUT HE'S A FANTASTIC HOLLA-BACK TO THE CRYPT KEEPER, THE OLD WITCH, AND THE VAULT-KEEPER. TIME WILL TELL IF THERE ARE MORE STORYTELLERS IN *HAUNTED HORROR*... IF WE LIVE TO SEE 'EM! *BWAHAHAHAH!*"* YOU WILL INDEED SEE A NEW HORROR HOST TO KEEP ME COMPANY... LOOK FOR *MR. KARSWELL* IN THE PULPY PAGES AHEAD. HE'S CUTE AND CUDDLY IN A GRUESOME, DISGUSTING, *PUTRID* SORT OF WAY!

*Denise Kitashima Dutton, Geekfore.com

Look for the third spine-tingling issue of *Haunted Horror* in two months!

If you collect horror comics and other Golden Age fare, we're always looking for scans for use in our books and comics. Please contact Craig Yoe through Facebook.

Editors: Steve Banes, Clizia Gussoni, and Craig Yoe.
Contributing Editors: Mike Howlett and Toxic Tommy O'Brien.

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On the cover, *Weird Mysteries* #1, October 1952. Artist: Basil Wolverton.

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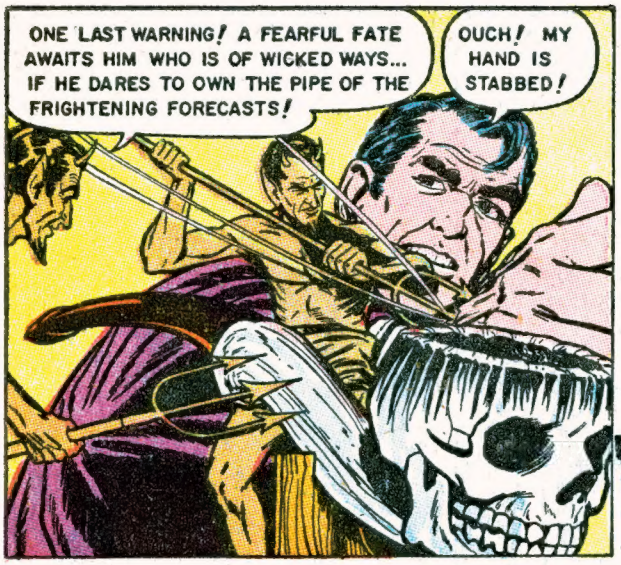
DOOMSMOKE
THE SKULL-PIPE WAS A HORRIFYING CURIO... CERTAINLY NOT ONE TO USE VIOLENCE TO GET. BUT IRA KRIM STOPPED AT NOTHING. HE COLLECTED STRANGE PIPES AS A HOBBY. HE WAS OBSESSED WITH THEM AND HE WANTED THIS ONE BADLY ENOUGH TO COMMIT VIOLENCE. SO HE LAUGHED OFF THE OLD CRONE'S WARNING AS A PIPE DREAM— UNTIL IT TURNED INTO A MACABRE, NIGHTMARISH REALITY. . .
HMMMM! WHAT STRANGE OBJECTS! THIS IS THE SORT OF PLACE A MAN MIGHT FIND THE ONE-IN-A-MILLION PIPE EVERY COLLECTOR DREAMS ABOUT! MIGHT AS WELL TAKE A LOOK AROUND!
HOPEFULLY, IRA KRIM WENT INSIDE . . .
GOOD EVENING! I'M MADAME GRAZZA, THE PROPRIETRESS. CAN I HELP YOU?
I'LL BET SHE KEEPS HER BEST ONES HIDDEN.
WHAT DO YOU HAVE IN THE LINE OF STRANGE PIPES?

The Beyond #29, November 1954. Artist: Ken Rice

JUST WHAT YOU SEE IN THAT RACK, SIR!
BAH! THEY'RE THE KIND ALL COLLECTORS HAVE! I'M LOOKING FOR SOMETHING REALLY UNIQUE... THE KIND YOU DON'T SHOW TO ORDINARY CUSTOMERS!
I SEE YOU HAVE REAL APPRECIATION! I HAVE SOMETHING HERE YOU'D ENJOY JUST LOOKING AT. BUT IT'S NOT FOR SALE!
WHAT A BUILDUP TO SUCKER ME INTO OFFERING A HIGH PRICE! BUT THERE'S NOTHING TO LOSE IN LOOKING AT IT!
IN THE BACK ROOM...
THIS SKULL-PIPE WAS BROUGHT BACK FROM THE WEST INDIES BY MY LATE HUSBAND, WHO WAS AN EXPLORER. IT IS MADE OF THE SHRUNKEN SKULL OF A VOODOO WITCH DOCTOR!
HMMM! IT IS RATHER ODD! WHY DON'T YOU WANT TO SELL IT?
THE PIPE HAS STRANGE AND MYSTIC POWERS WHICH MIGHT BE USED FOR EVIL PURPOSES IF IT GOT INTO THE WRONG HANDS! MY HUSBAND'S DYING COMMAND WAS NOT TO EVER LET IT GET OUT OF MY POSESSION! NOW I MUST PUT IT BACK ON THE SHELF UNDER THE WATCHFUL EYES OF ITS GUARDIAN DEMONS!
WHAT A BUNCH OF INSANE RUBBISH! BUT THE PIPE IS A RARE CURIO! I MUST HAVE IT FOR MY COLLECTION!
I RARELY SHOW THE PIPE, BUT YOU SEEM LIKE A NICE YOUNG MAN AND SUCH A REALLY AVID COLLECTOR THAT I KNEW YOU'D ENJOY SEEING THE PIECE EVEN THOUGH YOU CAN'T OWN IT!
CONFIDENT THAT HE COULD BUY THE PIPE FOR THE RIGHT PRICE, IRA KRIM RAISED HIS BIDS HIGHER AND HIGHER, UNTIL...
FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS, THEN! THAT'S MY FINAL OFFER! I MUST HAVE THAT PIPE FOR MY COLLECTION! NOW STOP YOUR SUPERSTITIOUS BLABBERING AND WRAP IT UP!
NO! I-I TOLD YOU I CANNOT SELL IT! GET OUT OF MY SHOP! LEAVE ME ALONE BEFORE I CALL THE POLICE!
ALL RIGHT, YOU BLASTED OLD FOOL! I GAVE YOU EVERY CHANCE FOR A FAIR DEAL! NOW I'LL TAKE THE THING! OUT OF MY WAY!
(2)


ONE LAST WARNING! A FEARFUL FATE AWAITS HIM WHO IS OF WICKED WAYS... IF HE DARES TO OWN THE PIPE OF THE FRIGHTENING FORECASTS!
OUCH! MY HAND IS STABBED!

BUT THAT LITTLE DEMON STATUE COULDN'T HAVE STABBED ME! I — I JUST SCRATCHED MY HAND ON ITS PITCHFORK! AND I — WELL, I JUST IMAGINED THAT IT SPOKE TO ME! IT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN ANYTHING ELSE!

CAUTIOUSLY, IRA KRIM REACHED FOR THE STRANGE PIPE . . .

THERE! I'VE GOT IT! THAT PROVES I WAS ONLY IMAGINING THINGS! NOW I'D BETTER GET OUT OF HERE BEFORE I GET AS BATTY AS OLD MADAME GRAZZA!

A LITTLE LATER, AT HOME IN HIS OWN DEN . . . . .

IF I DON'T SMOKE THIS THING AND PROVE TO MYSELF FOR ONCE AND ALL THAT IT DOESN'T HAVE MYSTIC POWERS SUCH AS THAT MAD WOMAN MUMBLED ABOUT, I'LL NEVER HAVE ANY PEACE OF MIND. HERE GOES!

THE SMOKE VISION GREW AND GREW UNTIL IT SEEMED TO IRA KRIM TO FILL THE WHOLE ROOM . . .

SEE, OH THIEF OF THE PIPE, THE KILLER IS YOU! YOU... STRANGLING YOUR RICH AND LOVELY WIFE, ARLEEN! THIS IS ONLY PART OF THE FATE IN STORE FOR YOU!

THE NEXT THING IRA KRIM KNEW, HE HAD FALLEN TO THE FLOOR, WAS DIZZILY TRYING TO RISE. . .

THAT—THAT VISION! IT WAS JUST A DREAM I HAD WHEN THE STRONG FUMES OF THE PIPE MADE ME SO SICK I FAINTED! BUT IT WAS HORRIBLY REALISTIC WHILE IT LASTED!

AND WHAT A RIDICULOUS DREAM! MURDERING MY LOVELY WIFE WOULD BE LIKE KILLING THE GOOSE THAT LAID THE GOLDEN EGG! HA-HA! WHAT LUDICROUS TRICKS THE HUMAN MIND WILL PLAY!

HE HAD NOT HEARD THE FOOTSTEPS APPROACH. . .

WHAT'S SO FUNNY, IRA? I'M GLAD TO FIND YOU IN SUCH A JOVIAL MOOD. PERHAPS IT'LL MAKE IT EASIER FOR YOU TO TAKE THE BAD NEWS I'M ABOUT TO GIVE YOU!

BAD NEWS? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, DARLING?

WE'RE FINISHED, IRA! FOR WEEKS NOW MY DETECTIVES HAVE GATHERED EVIDENCE OF YOUR GAMBLING AWAY MY MONEY, EVEN FORGING MY NAME TO CHECKS, ENTERTAINING OTHER WOMEN! I'M THROUGH BEING DUPED. I'M DIVORCING YOU AT ONCE! TRY TO STOP ME AND I'LL PROSECUTE YOU ON THE FORGERY CHARGES!

BADLY SHAKEN, KRIM PLEADED FOR ANOTHER CHANCE. . .

BUT YOU CAN'T DO THIS TO ME, ARLEEN! I HAVE DEBTS AND NO JOB! YOU'RE LEAVING ME STRANDED, DESTITUTE. . .

LET ME GO, IRA! MY LAWYER'S WAITING DOWNSTAIRS AND I TOLD HIM IF I DIDN'T COME DOWN IN A FEW MINUTES——

BUT A MANIACAL RAGE POSSESSED IRA KRIM AND BEFORE ARLEEN FINISHED THE SENTENCE, HIS HANDS CLAWED TOWARD HER THROAT. . .

I'LL STOP YOU! (GASP!) I'LL SHOW YOU YOU CAN'T DO THIS TO ME!

AS SUDDENLY AS IT HAD STRUCK, THE MURDEROUS RAGE FELL AWAY FROM HIM. . .

SHE'S. . . DEAD! JUST—JUST LIKE IN THE VISION THAT ROSE IN THE SMOKE FROM THE SKULL PIPE! NOW I'M A MURDERER! WHAT AM I GOING TO DO?

AS PANIC WRENCHED AT HIS BRAIN, IRA KRIM'S EYES SEEMED TO BE DRAWN TOWARD THE MYSTIC PIPE...

IT—IT FORETOLD THE FUTURE! IF IT DID IT ONCE, PERHAPS IT CAN DO IT AGAIN... AND NOW THAT I **KNOW**, ONCE I SEE WHAT IS FORECAST I CAN AT LEAST MAKE AN EFFORT TO AVOID IT, IF IT'S BAD!

KRIM LIT THE PIPE AND ONCE AGAIN A VISION APPEARED, AS FAINTNESS AND NAUSEA SWEPT OVER HIM . . .

RATS! I—I'M BEING ATTACKED BY VICIOUS RATS! HOW AWFUL... AND INCREDIBLE!

AND ONCE AGAIN THE VISION FADED AND KRIM FOUND HIMSELF PRONE ON THE FLOOR. BUT THIS TIME...

OPEN UP, KRIM! THIS IS ARLENE'S LAWYER AND I HAVE AN OFFICER WITH ME! SHE WAS AFRAID OF YOUR VIOLENT TEMPER AND SHE SAID IF SHE DIDN'T COME DOWN IN TEN MINUTES, I WAS TO COME UP AND INVESTIGATE!

KNOCK KNOCK

BUT KRIM DECIDED NOT TO FACE THE LAW...

I'VE GOT TO RUN FOR IT!

YOU CAN'T GET AWAY, KRIM! IF YOU'VE HURT ARLEEN I'LL— THERE HE GOES, OFFICER! STOP HIM!

OUTSIDE, KRIM FRANTICALLY SOUGHT A MEANS OF ESCAPE...

ONCE THEY EMERGE FROM THAT ALLEY ONTO THE STREET, THEY'LL SPOT ME! I'VE GOT TO HIDE! THEY WON'T THINK OF LOOKING FOR ME DOWN HERE!

IN THE DANK DARKNESS OF THE SEWER KRIM RESTED WHILE PURSUIT PASSED HIM BY. FINALLY...

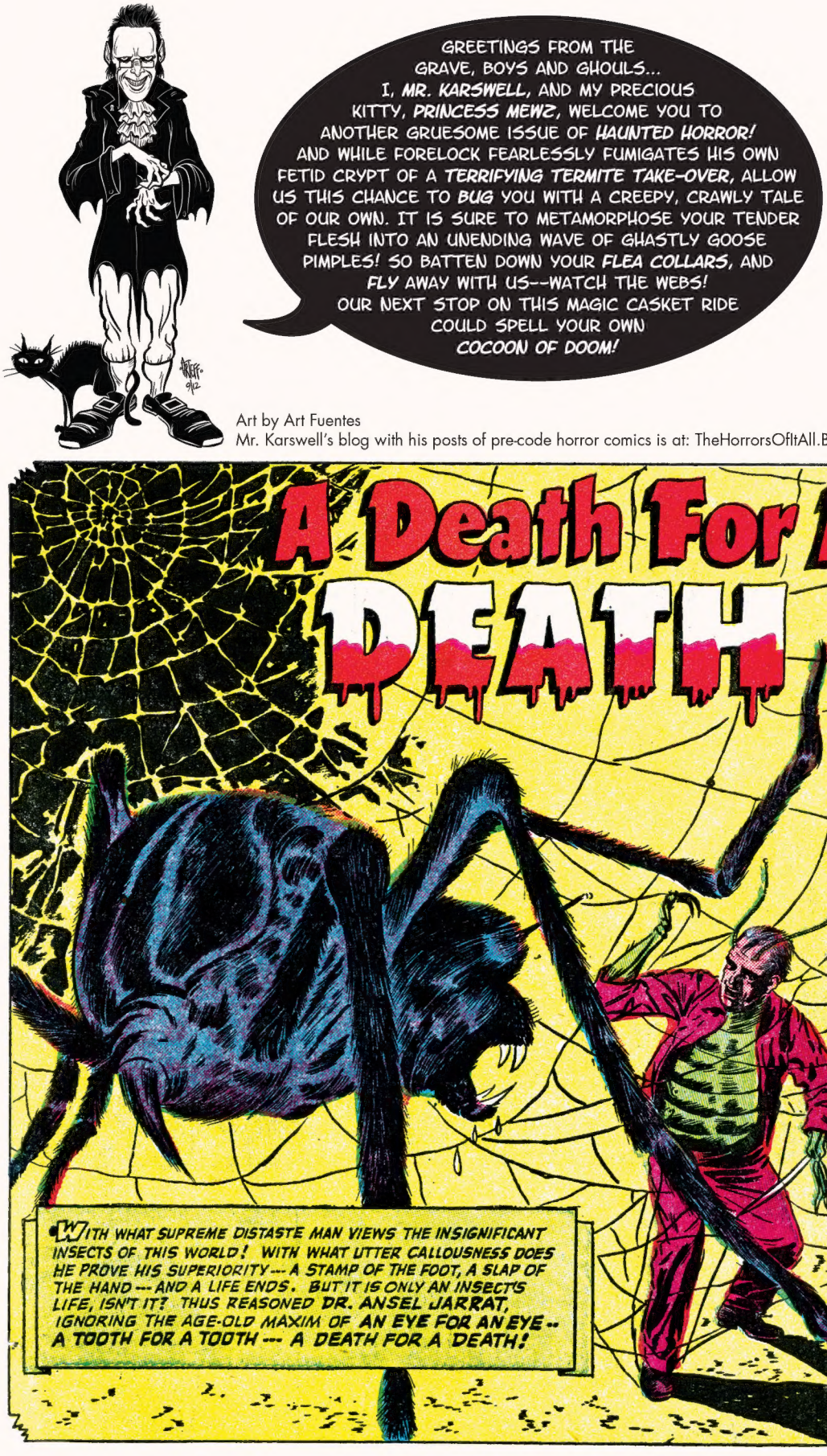
I'VE BEEN DOWN HERE FIFTEEN MINUTES NOW! IT SHOULD BE SAFE TO LEAVE! BUT I'D BETTER LIGHT A MATCH SO I WON'T BREAK MY NECK CLIMBING THE LADDER!

I--- EEEEYIIIAAAAH!

I FORGOT ABOUT THE SECOND VISION! IT'S COME TRUE! ARRRRRRH!

A FEW MOMENTS LATER, KRIM'S SCREAMS ATTRACTED THE ATTENTION OF A PASSERBY . . .
THANKS FOR COMING TO MY RESCUE, MISTER! WHEN YOU CLANGED OPEN THE COVER IT SCARED OFF THE RATS!
GLAD TO HELP, FELLA, BUT WHAT IN THE DICKENS WERE YOU DOING DOWN THERE?
IT'S A LONG STORY! CAN'T STOP TO TELL IT NOW!... TAXI!!!
OKAY, MAC!
TEMPORARILY SAFE IN THE CAB, KRIM FOUND THAT HE'D THRUST THE SKULL PIPE INTO HIS JACKET POCKET BEFORE FLEEING THE APARTMENT. NOW . . .
THE VISIONS OF THE FUTURE HAVE BEEN INFALLIBLE SO FAR! I'VE GOT TO LEARN WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT... AND THIS TIME STAY ON GUARD AGAINST IT!
PERHAPS YOU'VE SUFFERED ENOUGH FOR STEALING OUR PIPE OF THE FRIGHTENING FORECASTS! RETURN IT IMMEDIATELY TO MADAME GRAZZA AND OUR VOODOO POWERS WILL PROTECT YOU FROM THE POLICE! DISOBEY US AND THIS IS YOUR FATE...
THE VISION OF THE VOODOO DEMONS FADED THEN, AND IN THEIR PLACE, KRIM SAW . . .
A FEW MINUTES LATER . . .
WHAT A SCREWBALL! PASSES OUT FROM SMOKIN' THAT SMELLY, CRAZY-LOOKIN' PIPE... AND THEN WHEN I REVIVE HIM HE'S IN A BIG RUSH TO REACH THIS SCREWY LITTLE SHOP!
GOOD LORD, SHE MUST BE COUNTING HER LIFE SAVINGS! THERE'S A COUPLE OF THOUSAND DOLLARS ON THAT DESK!
AH, YOUNG MAN, I SEE YOU'VE DECIDED TO RETURN THE PIPE! THE GUARDIAN DEMONS INFORMED ME THAT YOU WOULD!
6

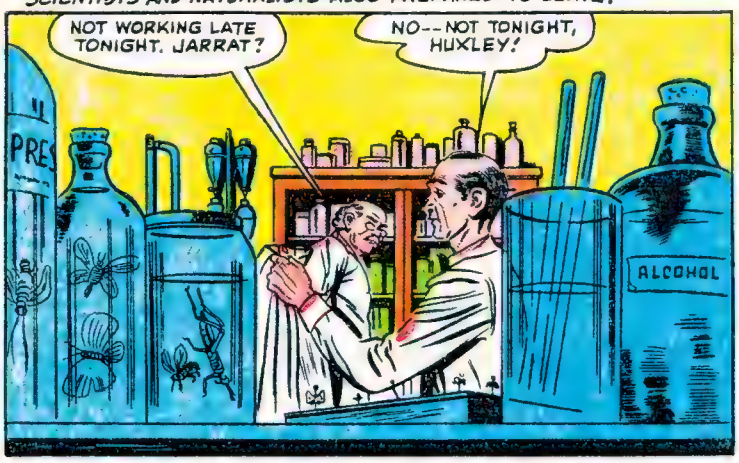
YES, THAT WAS WHAT I HAD IN MIND WHEN I CAME HERE!
BUT THE SIGHT OF ALL THAT MONEY GIVES ME ANOTHER IDEA! I NEED CASH—QUICK CASH- TO COMPLETE MY ESCAPE! SO THIS IS THE WAY YOU GET THE PIPE BACK!
UGGGH!
THE PIPE CRUMBLED TO POWDERED DUST-AND FROM IT ANOTHER VISION IS FORMED! IT SAYS...
IRA KRIM ELECTROCUTED
BUT THIS ONE WAS WRONG! AND SO WAS THE ONE BEFORE IT, EVEN IF I DO GET CAUGHT I CAN'T BE ELECTROCUTED. THE DEATH PENALTY IN THIS STATE IS THE GAS CHAMBER! SO THE VISIONS WERE NOT INFALLIBLE! HA HA!
BUT IN HIS HASTE TO LEAVE, KRIM DIDN'T SEE THE TINY WOODEN FIGURE OF ONE OF THE GUARDIAN DEMONS ON THE FLOOR. IT THREW HIM OFF BALANCE...
ANYHOW, THE MYSTIC PIPE IS SMASHED NOW! IT CAN HAVE NO MORE POWER OVER ME! IT--- WHOOPS! W- WHAT,..?
FLAILING WILDLY TO KEEP FROM FALLING TOO HARD, KRIM'S SWEAT-WET HAND CLUTCHED AT THE FRAYED LAMP WIRE...
... AND THUS THE LAST OF THE FRIGHTENING FORECASTS CAME TRUE DESPITE THE DECREE OF HUMAN LAWS...
EEEEAAARRRGH!
THE END


GREETINGS FROM THE GRAVE, BOYS AND GHOULS... I, MR. KARSWELL, AND MY PRECIOUS KITTY, PRINCESS MEWZ, WELCOME YOU TO ANOTHER GRUESOME ISSUE OF HAUNTED HORROR! AND WHILE FORELOCK FEARLESSLY FUMIGATES HIS OWN FETID CRYPT OF A TERRIFYING TERMITE TAKE-OVER, ALLOW US THIS CHANCE TO BUG YOU WITH A CREEPY, CRAWLY TALE OF OUR OWN. IT IS SURE TO METAMORPHOSE YOUR TENDER FLESH INTO AN UNENDING WAVE OF GHASTLY GOOSE PIMPLES! SO BATTEN DOWN YOUR FLEA COLLARS, AND FLY AWAY WITH US--WATCH THE WEBS! OUR NEXT STOP ON THIS MAGIC CASKET RIDE COULD SPELL YOUR OWN COCOON OF DOOM!
A Death For A DEATH
WITH WHAT SUPREME DISTASTE MAN VIEWS THE INSIGNIFICANT INSECTS OF THIS WORLD! WITH WHAT UTTER CALLOUSNESS DOES HE PROVE HIS SUPERIORITY--- A STAMP OF THE FOOT, A SLAP OF THE HAND --- AND A LIFE ENDS. BUT IT IS ONLY AN INSECT'S LIFE, ISN'T IT? THUS REASONED DR. ANSEL JARRAT, IGNORING THE AGE-OLD MAXIM OF AN EYE FOR AN EYE-- A TOOTH FOR A TOOTH --- A DEATH FOR A DEATH!

Art by Art Fuentes
Mr. Karswell's blog with his posts of pre-code horror comics is at: TheHorrorsOfItAll.Blogspot.com

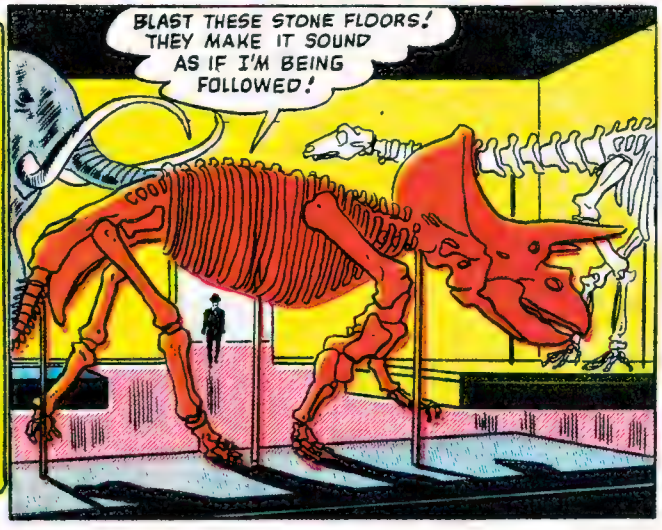
Worlds of Fear #6, September 1952. Artist unknown.

THE GREAT BRONZE DOOR OF THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM HAD SWUNG SHUT AFTER THE LAST VISITOR, AND BEHIND THE SILENT EXHIBIT HALLS, IN THE RESEARCH LABORATORY, THE MUSEUM'S SCIENTISTS AND NATURALISTS ALSO PREPARED TO LEAVE!



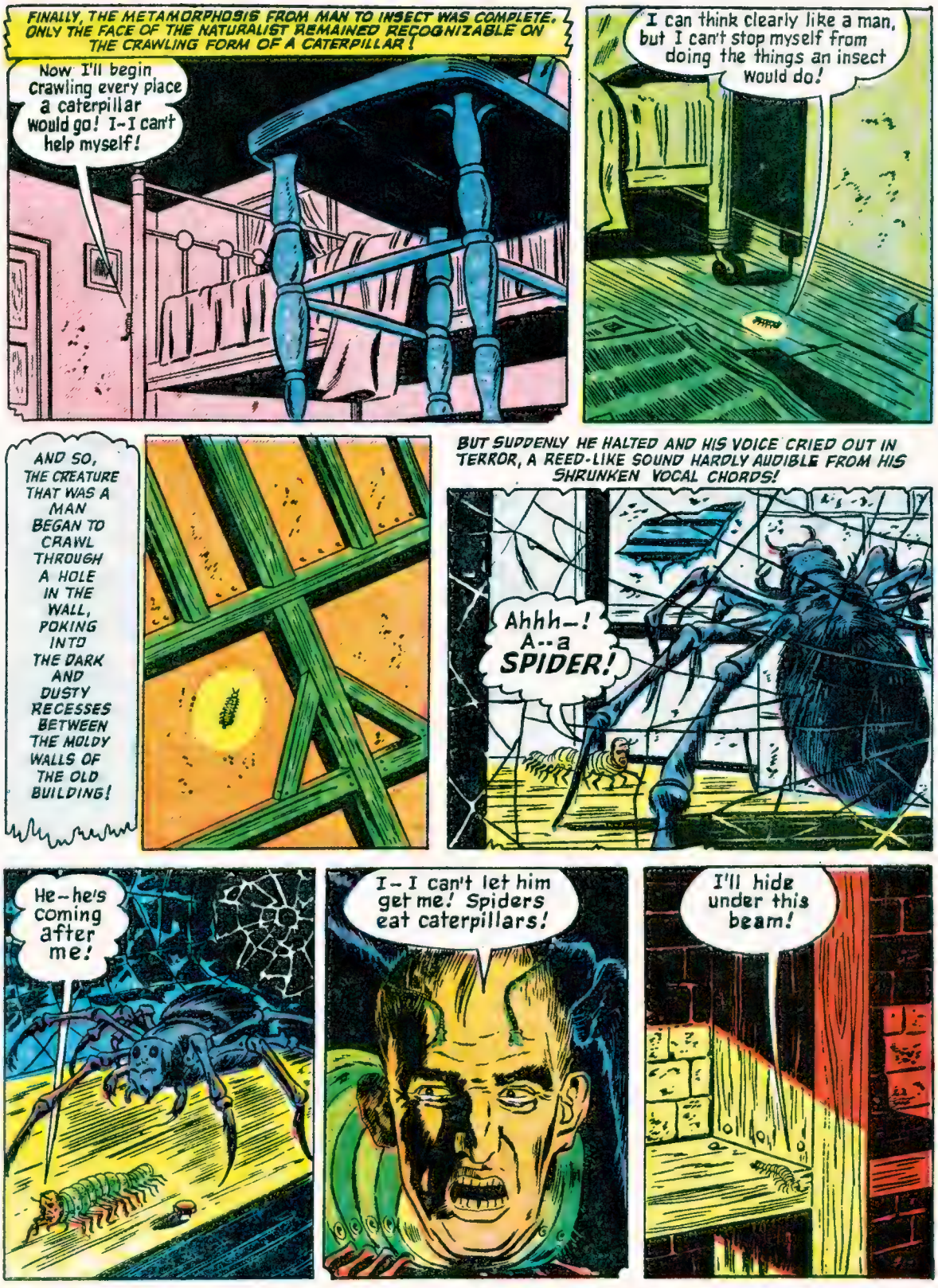
WHAT'S BOTHERING JARRAT? HE'S BEEN NERVOUS AS A CAT LATELY.
HAVEN'T ANY IDEA, ROGERS. JARRAT'S A FUNNY SORT OF CHAP --- ALWAYS HAS BEEN!

DR. ANSEL JARRAT HURRIED THROUGH THE ECHOING CORRIDORS OF THE INSECT HALL, HIS HEELS RESOUNDING SHARPLY, ALMOST FRIGHTENINGLY, IN THE STILLNESS OF THE EMPTY MUSEUM.



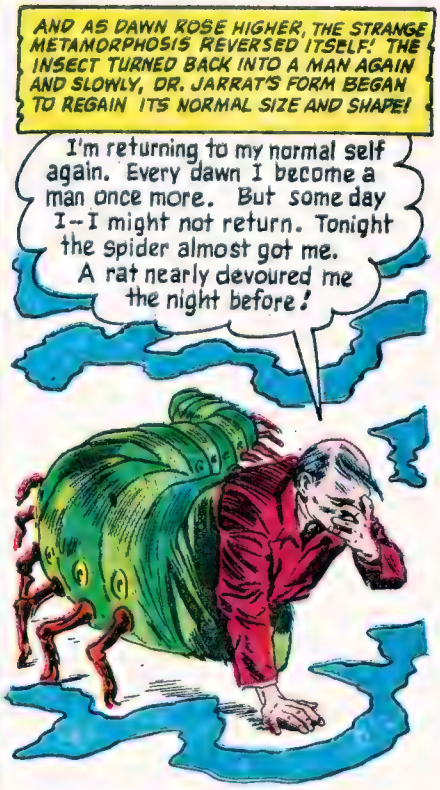
THE DRAWN, TENSE FIGURE HURRIED INTO THE NIGHT, SHOULDERING HIS WAY THROUGH HOMEWARD-BOUND THRONGS TILL FINALLY HE REACHED AN OFFICE WHERE...
WE'VE FOUND NOTHING, DR. JARRAT. ALL OUR TESTS HAVE PROVED NEGATIVE. AS I SAID WHEN YOU FIRST CAME TO SEE ME, YOU'VE JUST BEEN HAVING HALLUCINATIONS.
HALLUCINATIONS! NO! THEY'RE REAL. I TELL YOU --- REAL!
NOW, DR. JARRAT -- DON'T EXCITE YOURSELF, PLEASE. YOU'VE BEEN WORKING TOO HARD, THAT'S ALL.
NERVOUSNESS AND OVERWORK DO STRANGE THINGS TO THE MIND. I WANT YOU TO GO TO SEE DR. HAWTHORNE --- A VERY FINE PSYCHIATRIST. PERHAPS HE CAN...
WITH AGONIZED FURY, JARRAT'S SHOUT CUT SHORT THE MEASURED PROFESSIONAL PHRASES OF THE PHYSICIAN!
NO! I'M NOT CRAZY! I DON'T NEED A PSYCHIATRIST! YOU'RE LIKE ALL THE OTHERS! YOU'RE THE FOOLS!
THAT'S WHAT YOU ARE --- FOOLS, ALL FOOLS! PSYCHIATRISTS --- OVERWORK!... BAH!
ANGRILY, THE NATURALIST HURRIED INTO THE STREETS AND WALKED TO THE MODEST BROWNSTONE-FRONT HOUSE WHERE HE ROOMED. HIS HANDS SHOOK WITH AN UNNAMED FEAR AS HE TURNED THE DOORKNOB AND ENTERED THE HOUSE.
DR. JARRAT, YOU'RE HOME EARLY TONIGHT! I CLEANED YOUR ROOM TODAY. IT'S SPICK AND SPAN NOW!
FOOLS! HOW CAN I MAKE THEM UNDERSTAND?!
WELL, WHAT'S EATING HIM? A FINE WAY TO TREAT HIS LANDLADY, I SAY!

STRANGELY PREOCCUPIED, JARRAT WENT INTO HIS RENTED ROOM AND CAREFULLY LOCKED THE DOOR. BARELY CONTROLLING HIS SHAKING HANDS, HE QUICKLY UNDRESSED AND SNAPPED OFF THE LIGHT.
I'M SO TIRED--- SO TERRIBLY TIRED! IF I CAN ONLY SLEEP. I'VE GOT TO TRY-- I'VE GOT TO!
A FITFUL SLUMBER CAME TO DR. JARRAT, DISTURBED ONLY BY HIS OWN MUTTERING AND TURNING. BUT SUDDENLY, SHORTLY PAST MIDNIGHT, HE SAT BOLT UPRIGHT! HIS VERY FLESH QUIVERED AND CRAWLED WITH A STRANGE CHILL!
OH, NO! IT... IT'S STARTING AGAIN! I--I CAN'T STOP IT!
IT -- IT'S COMING AGAIN! I--I CAN'T STAND IT-- I CAN'T!
BUT AS THE NATURALIST SHOOK WITH HELPLESS FEAR, A STRANGE AND HORRIBLE CHANGE CAME OVER HIM. FIRST, TWO LONG INSECT FEELERS SPROUTED FROM HIS FOREHEAD. LONGER AND LONGER THEY GREW, WHILE HIS BODY BEGAN TO SHRINK---
THE HELPLESS MAN'S ARMS TURNED TO TINY, HAIRY LEGS AS HIS BODY TOOK ON THE FORM OF AN INSECT.
I--I'M TURNING INTO A CATERPILLAR!
Last time, it was a fly. Before that, a centipede and before that, a beetle.


FINALLY, THE METAMORPHOSIS FROM MAN TO INSECT WAS COMPLETE. ONLY THE FACE OF THE NATURALIST REMAINED RECOGNIZABLE ON THE CRAWLING FORM OF A CATERPILLAR!
Now I'll begin crawling every place a caterpillar would go! I-I can't help myself!
I can think clearly like a man, but I can't stop myself from doing the things an insect would do!
AND SO, THE CREATURE THAT WAS A MAN BEGAN TO CRAWL THROUGH A HOLE IN THE WALL, POKING INTO THE DARK AND DUSTY RECESSES BETWEEN THE MOLDY WALLS OF THE OLD BUILDING!
BUT SUDDENLY HE HALTED AND HIS VOICE CRIED OUT IN TERROR, A REED-LIKE SOUND HARDLY AUDIBLE FROM HIS SHRUNKEN VOCAL CHORDS!
Ahhh-! A--a SPIDER!
He-he's coming after me!
I-I can't let him get me! Spiders eat caterpillars!
I'll hide under this beam!

He didn't see me! I'm safe!

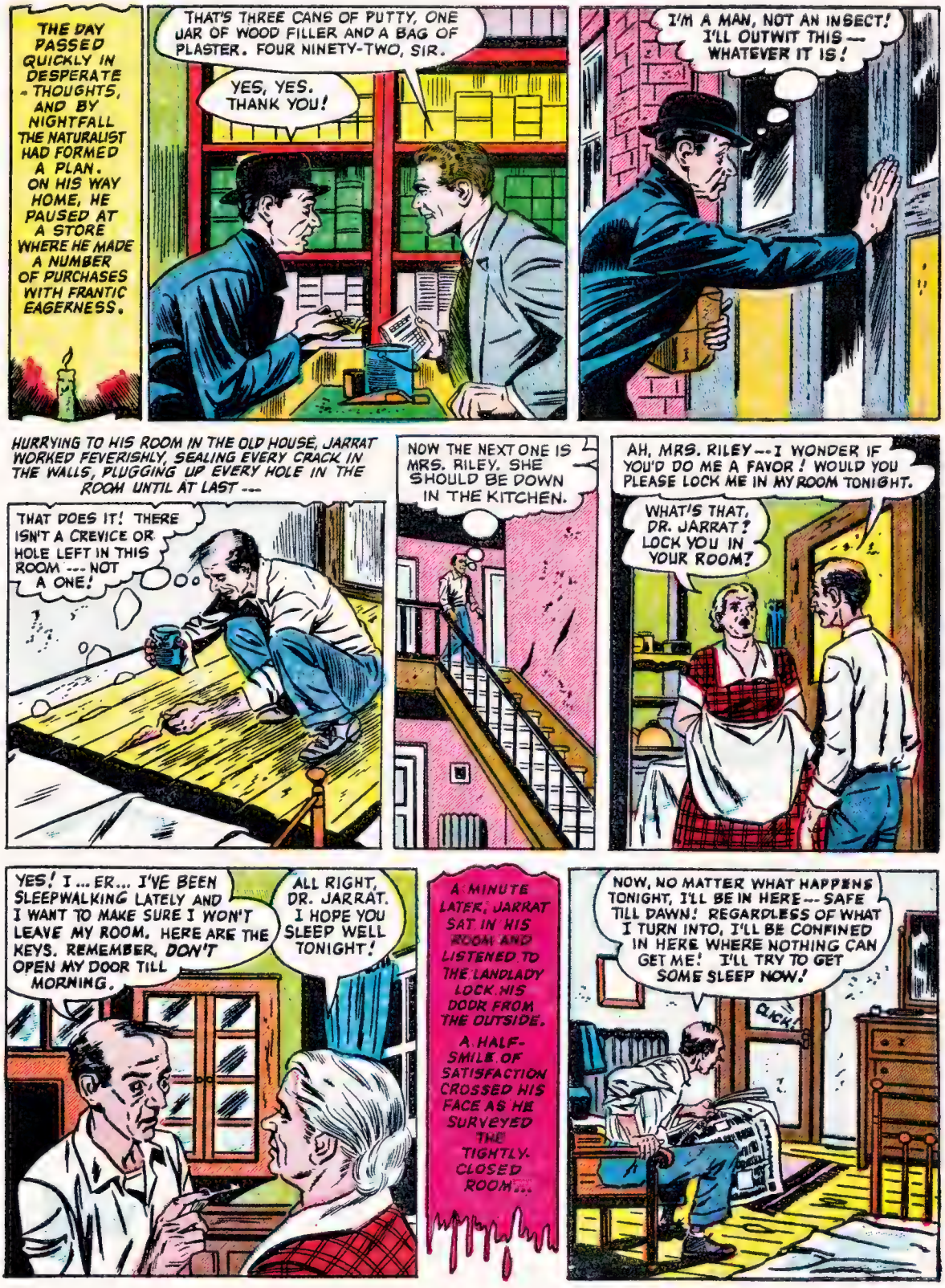
AND SO LATER, JARRAT, THE CATERPILLAR, EMERGED FROM HIS HIDING PLACE TO WANDER THROUGH THE MUSTY INNER WALLS IN SEARCH OF THE HOLE TO HIS ROOM. FINALLY, AS THE FIRST RAYS OF DAWN STREAKED THE SKY, HE FOUND IT AND ---
I --- I'm back at last!


AND AS DAWN ROSE HIGHER, THE STRANGE METAMORPHOSIS REVERSED ITSELF! THE INSECT TURNED BACK INTO A MAN AGAIN AND SLOWLY, DR. JARRAT'S FORM BEGAN TO REGAIN ITS NORMAL SIZE AND SHAPE!
I'm returning to my normal self again. Every dawn I become a man once more. But some day I--I might not return. Tonight the spider almost got me. A rat nearly devoured me the night before!

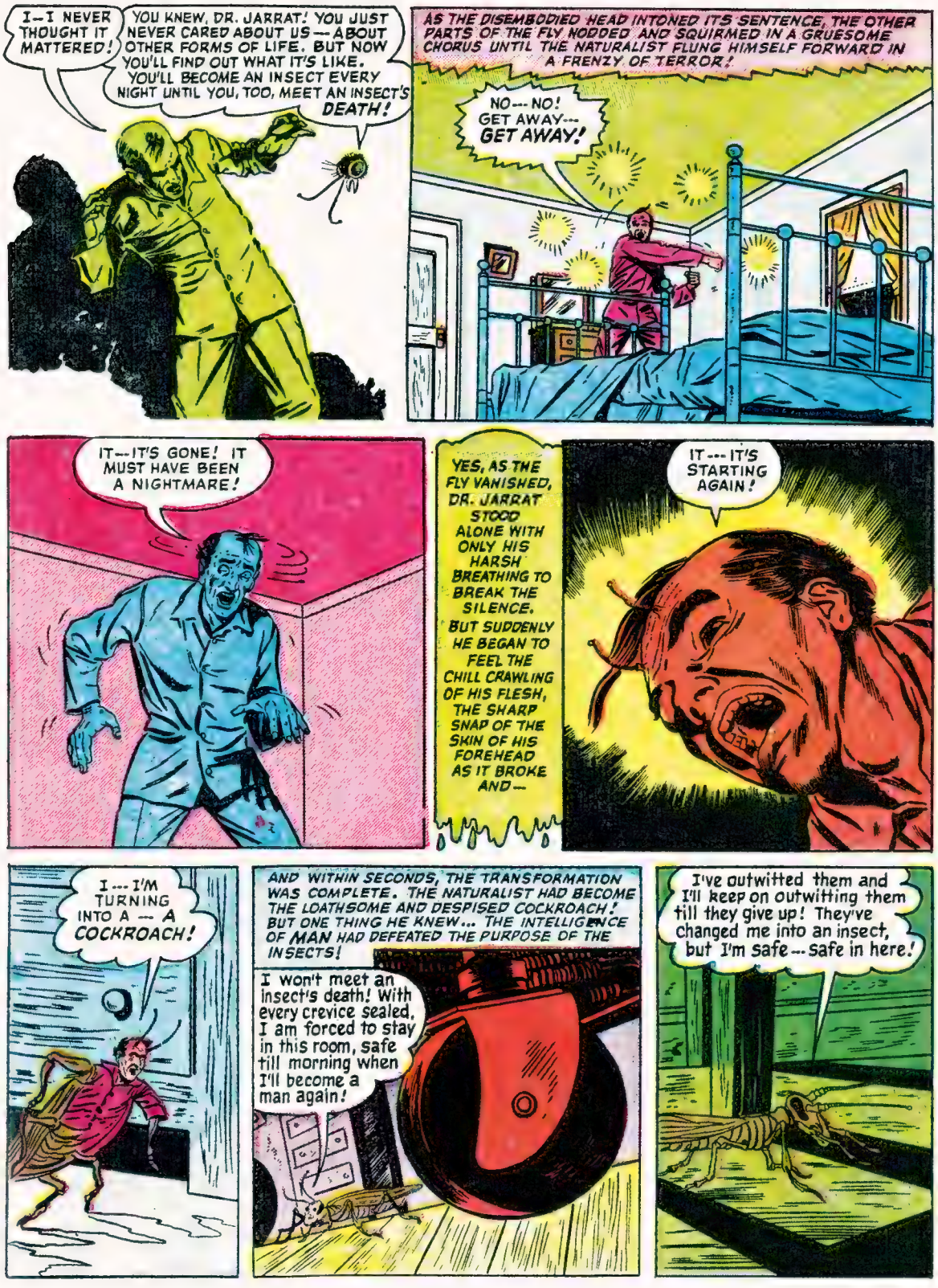
BUT WHY --- WHY IS THIS HAPPENING TO ME EVERY NIGHT? THE DOCTOR SAYS I'M CRAZY! I CAN'T MAKE THEM UNDERSTAND! WHAT CAN I DO --- WHAT CAN I SAY!

IT'S TIME FOR ME TO GO TO WORK. I MUST GO. THEY--WOULDN'T UNDERSTAND EITHER! NOBODY WOULD--NOBODY!

THE EXHAUSTED JARRAT DRAGGED HIMSELF TO THE MUSEUM WHERE, WITH AN ALMOST ANGRY FERVOR, HE PLUNGED HIMSELF INTO HIS WORK PREPARING THE INSECT EXHIBITS, HIS MIND DESPERATELY RACING.
I'VE GOT TO THINK OF SOMETHING --- I'VE GOT TO! I CAN'T GO ON THIS WAY!


THE DAY PASSED QUICKLY IN DESPERATE THOUGHTS, AND BY NIGHTFALL THE NATURALIST HAD FORMED A PLAN. ON HIS WAY HOME, HE PAUSED AT A STORE WHERE HE MADE A NUMBER OF PURCHASES WITH FRANTIC EAGERNESS.
THAT'S THREE CANS OF PUTTY, ONE JAR OF WOOD FILLER AND A BAG OF PLASTER. FOUR NINETY-TWO, SIR.
YES, YES. THANK YOU!
I'M A MAN, NOT AN INSECT! I'LL OUTWIT THIS — WHATEVER IT IS!
HURRYING TO HIS ROOM IN THE OLD HOUSE, JARRAT WORKED FEVERISHLY, SEALING EVERY CRACK IN THE WALLS, PLUGGING UP EVERY HOLE IN THE ROOM UNTIL AT LAST —
THAT DOES IT! THERE ISN'T A CREVICE OR HOLE LEFT IN THIS ROOM — NOT A ONE!
NOW THE NEXT ONE IS MRS. RILEY. SHE SHOULD BE DOWN IN THE KITCHEN.
AH, MRS. RILEY — I WONDER IF YOU'D DO ME A FAVOR! WOULD YOU PLEASE LOCK ME IN MY ROOM TONIGHT.
WHAT'S THAT, DR. JARRAT? LOCK YOU IN YOUR ROOM?
YES! I ... ER... I'VE BEEN SLEEPWALKING LATELY AND I WANT TO MAKE SURE I WON'T LEAVE MY ROOM. HERE ARE THE KEYS. REMEMBER, DON'T OPEN MY DOOR TILL MORNING.
ALL RIGHT, DR. JARRAT. I HOPE YOU SLEEP WELL TONIGHT!
A MINUTE LATER, JARRAT SAT IN HIS ROOM AND LISTENED TO THE LANDLADY LOCK HIS DOOR FROM THE OUTSIDE.
A HALF-SMILE OF SATISFACTION CROSSED HIS FACE AS HE SURVEYED THE TIGHTLY-CLOSED ROOM...
NOW, NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS TONIGHT, I'LL BE IN HERE — SAFE TILL DAWN! REGARDLESS OF WHAT I TURN INTO, I'LL BE CONFINED IN HERE WHERE NOTHING CAN GET ME! I'LL TRY TO GET SOME SLEEP NOW!
CLICK!

JARRAT QUICKLY WENT TO BED AND SLEEP GAVE HIM MOMENTARY SURCEASE. BUT THE NIGHT WAS STILL YOUNG WHEN HE WAS AWAKENED BY A STRANGE RUSTLING SOUND!
WHAT--- WHAT'S THAT?
THEN, AS HIS EYES BECAME ACCUSTOMED TO THE DARKNESS, JARRAT SAW THE THING THAT RUSTLED. HIS NATURALIST'S TRAINING QUICKLY TOLD HIM WHAT THE OBJECT WAS.
THE WINGS OF A FLY! BUT THEY'RE-- GIANT SIZE!
AND THEN, SLOWLY, OTHER OBJECTS BEGAN TO APPEAR, AND THE MAN'S BLOOD RAN COLD WITH A NEW, MORE HORRIBLE TERROR!
AND THERE--THERE'S THE HEAD. AND THE BODY'S OVER THERE! PARTS ARE SCATTERED ALL OVER THE ROOM! I-I MUST BE GOING MAD! I MUST BE!
NO, DR. JARRAT-- YOU'RE NOT GOING MAD!
EH...? IT--IT TALKS!
YOU HAVEN'T BEEN IMAGINING THE NIGHTLY CHANGES THAT HAVE COME OVER YOU, DR. JARRAT. YOU DON'T REMEMBER ME, OF COURSE--YOU WOULDN'T! I'M JUST ONE OF THE HELPLESS INSECTS YOU DISSECT FOR YOUR EXHIBITS AT THE MUSEUM!
ONLY WE KNOW HOW YOU PREPARE YOUR EXHIBITS, DON'T WE, DOCTOR? YOU'RE NOT LIKE THE OTHER NATURALISTS WHO MERCIFULLY CHLOROFORM US FIRST! YOU JUST PULL US APART WHILE WE STILL LIVE!
NO!

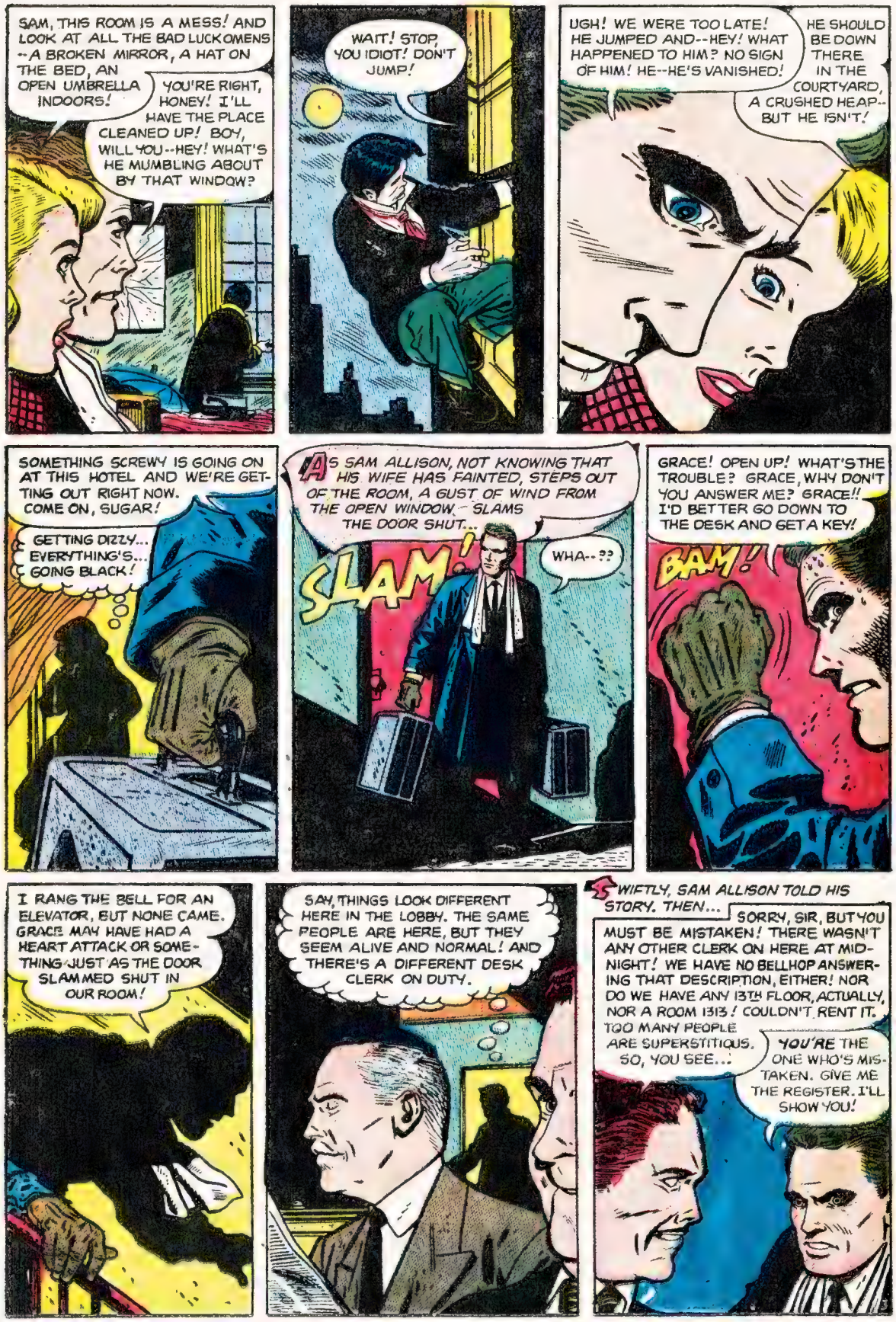

I—I NEVER THOUGHT IT MATTERED!
YOU KNEW, DR. JARRAT! YOU JUST NEVER CARED ABOUT US — ABOUT OTHER FORMS OF LIFE. BUT NOW YOU'LL FIND OUT WHAT IT'S LIKE. YOU'LL BECOME AN INSECT EVERY NIGHT UNTIL YOU, TOO, MEET AN INSECT'S DEATH!
AS THE DISEMBODIED HEAD INTONED ITS SENTENCE, THE OTHER PARTS OF THE FLY NODDED AND SQUIRMED IN A GRUESOME CHORUS UNTIL THE NATURALIST FLUNG HIMSELF FORWARD IN A FRENZY OF TERROR!
NO— NO! GET AWAY— GET AWAY!
IT—IT'S GONE! IT MUST HAVE BEEN A NIGHTMARE!
YES, AS THE FLY VANISHED, DR. JARRAT STOOD ALONE WITH ONLY HIS HARSH BREATHING TO BREAK THE SILENCE. BUT SUDDENLY HE BEGAN TO FEEL THE CHILL CRAWLING OF HIS FLESH, THE SHARP SNAP OF THE SKIN OF HIS FOREHEAD AS IT BROKE AND—
IT— IT'S STARTING AGAIN!
I— I'M TURNING INTO A — A COCKROACH!
AND WITHIN SECONDS, THE TRANSFORMATION WAS COMPLETE. THE NATURALIST HAD BECOME THE LOATHSOME AND DESPISED COCKROACH! BUT ONE THING HE KNEW... THE INTELLIGENCE OF MAN HAD DEFEATED THE PURPOSE OF THE INSECTS!
I won't meet an insect's death! With every crevice sealed, I am forced to stay in this room, safe till morning when I'll become a man again!
I've outwitted them and I'll keep on outwitting them till they give up! They've changed me into an insect, but I'm safe — safe in here!

BUT OUTSIDE THE NATURALIST'S ROOM, THE HAND OF FATE TOOK UP ITS PEN TO WRITE ANOTHER LINE IN THE BOOK OF ETERNITY!
DR. JARRAT HASN'T BEEN AT ALL HIMSELF LATELY. I'LL JUST LOOK IN ON HIM BEFORE I GO TO BED.
I JUST WANT TO MAKE SURE HE'S ALL RIGHT!
MRS. RILEY CAREFULLY OPENED THE DOOR AND, WITH A LANDLADY'S PRACTICED EYE, INSTANTLY SPOTTED THE COCKROACH CAUGHT IN THE GLARE OF THE HALL LIGHT! A GASP ESCAPED HER AND...
OH! A COCKROACH!
I'LL GET IT! I'LL HAVE NONE OF THEM IN MY HOUSE!
No, No! Mrs. Riley! It's me... Dr. Jarrat!
THUD!
THERE! THAT'S GOT IT!
Aaaaaa-a-aaa-ah!
AND SO ENDED THE LIFE OF A MAN, BLITHELY SNUFFED OUT BY A LAW GREATER THAN ANY MAN MAY WRITE! REMEMBER, ALL YOU MORTALS, THE STRANGE STORY OF DR. JARRAT, WHO THOUGHT AN INSECT WAS ONLY AN INSECT, BUT FORGOT THAT A MAN IS ONLY A MAN!

CORPSE CONVENTION
NEWLYWEDS SAM AND GRACE ALLISON ARRIVED IN NEW YORK THE FIRST NIGHT OF THEIR HONEYMOON, ONLY TO MEET DIFFICULTY IN FINDING LODGINGS. AFTER CALLING A DOZEN HOTELS AND FINDING NO VACANCIES, THEY WERE GETTING A LITTLE DESPERATE. BUT THEIR 13TH CALL TO A SMALL MIDTOWN SIDE STREET HOTEL, THE MARTA, DID THE TRICK. THEY WERE TOLD A ROOM WOULD BE AWAITING THEM UPON ARRIVAL. THE INSTANT THEY ENTERED THE LOBBY, THOUGH, AN INEXPLICABLE FEELING OF FOREBODING CHILLED THEM. THE PLACE HELD THE MUSTY ODOR, THE DEATHLY QUIET AND STILLNESS OF A TOMB...
I'VE BEEN RINGING THIS BELL FOR A FULL FIVE MINUTES!! WHERE IN BLAZES IS THE CLERK?
SAM--I--SOMETHING'S WRONG HERE!! THESE PEOPLE IN THE LOBBY AREN'T MOVING!! THEY JUST SIT AND STARE!!—LIKE DEAD CREATURES!! I'M F-FRIGHTENED, SAM!! LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!! —QUICKLY!!
FRIDAY 13
BING
BANG
AND SPEND THE NIGHT ON A PARK BENCH? WE CALLED JUST ABOUT EVERY OTHER HOTEL IN TOWN AND COULDN'T GET IN! WE'VE GOT TO STAY HERE, TONIGHT, AT LEAST!
SAM, LOOK! IT--IT WAS THURSDAY NIGHT WHEN WE ARRIVED HERE, BUT IT'S MIDNIGHT NOW. IT'S FRIDAY, THE 13TH, SAM! THE UNLUCKIEST DAY OF THE YEAR!
FRIDAY 13
HONEY, I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE THAT SUPERSTITIOUS! IF THAT ROOM CLERK DOESN'T SHOW UP SOON, WE'LL--
HERE I AM, SIR! YOU'RE MR. AND MRS. ALLISON, I PRESUME?
W- WHAT! WHERE DID YOU COME FROM?
HAD TO LEAVE THE DESK FOR A MOMENT, SIR. HOPE YOU GOOD PEOPLE AREN'T SUPERSTITIOUS, BECAUSE THE ONLY ROOM AVAILABLE IS ON THE 13TH FLOOR, ROOM 1313. QUITE A COINCIDENCE, EH?
HA-HA! HO-HO!

Adventures Into Darkness #6, October 1952. Artist: George Tuska

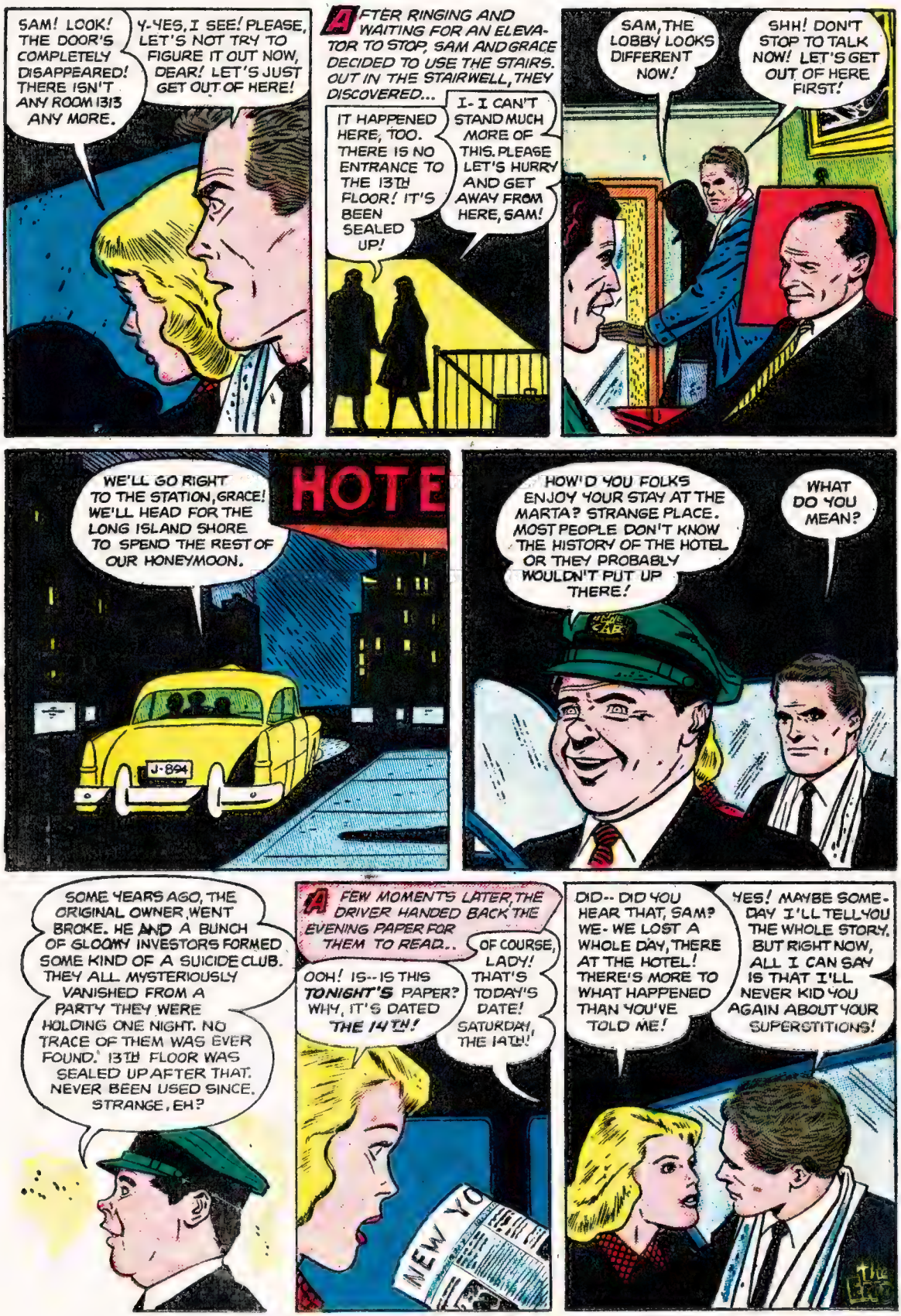
NO! NO! SAM, THAT-- THAT WOULD BE TEMPTING TOO MUCH. ALL THOSE 13'S!
NONSENSE, DEAR! WE HAVE NO CHOICE!
I'LL HAVE SOMEONE CARRY YOUR BAGS UPSTAIRS! BOY! FRONT, BOY!
SOMETHING'S WRONG HERE, SAM -- TERRIBLY WRONG! I CAN SENSE IT!
PING!
LOOK! THE INDICATOR DOESN'T SHOW ANY 13TH FLOOR! AND--AND I CAN HEAR THE ELEVATOR MOVING, YET THE INDICATOR ARROW REMAINS STILL!
OF COURSE, MA'AM! INDICATOR WAS MADE THAT WAY FOR THE BENEFIT OF SUPERSTITIOUS PEOPLE! IT'S THAT WAY IN ALL HOTELS! BUT THERE HAS TO BE A 13TH FLOOR, EVEN IF IT'S LABELED THE 14TH! AND THE INDICATOR IS BROKEN. DOES THAT SOLVE YOUR MYSTERIES, EH?
CLANG!
RATTLE!
FLOOR THIRTEEN, SIR!
BUT YOU SAID THAT THE 13TH FLOOR WAS LABELED THE 14TH AND--AND--OH, NEVER MIND! I--I GUESS I'M JUST CONFUSED!
HA-HA-HO-HO!
EEEE-EY!!!
ARRRRGH!
SAM! LISTEN! IT--IT SOUNDS AS IF SOMEONE'S BEING MURDERED IN THERE!
PAY NO ATTENTION. PROBABLY JUST A WILD PARTY!
WELCOME! YOU MUST JOIN OUR SUICIDE CLUB TONIGHT IN OUR ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF DEATH! COME!
NO! NO! LET GO!
OOOHH!
NOT YET, YOU FOOL! GET BACK IN!
SORRY YOU WERE FRIGHTENED, FOLKS! EVERY YEAR ON FRIDAY THE 13TH, A GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO LIKE TO DEFY SUPERSTITION, HOLD A PARTY HERE--IN COSTUME! SOMETIMES THEY GET A LITTLE WILD! THAT SKELETON COSTUME WAS VERY REALISTIC, EH?

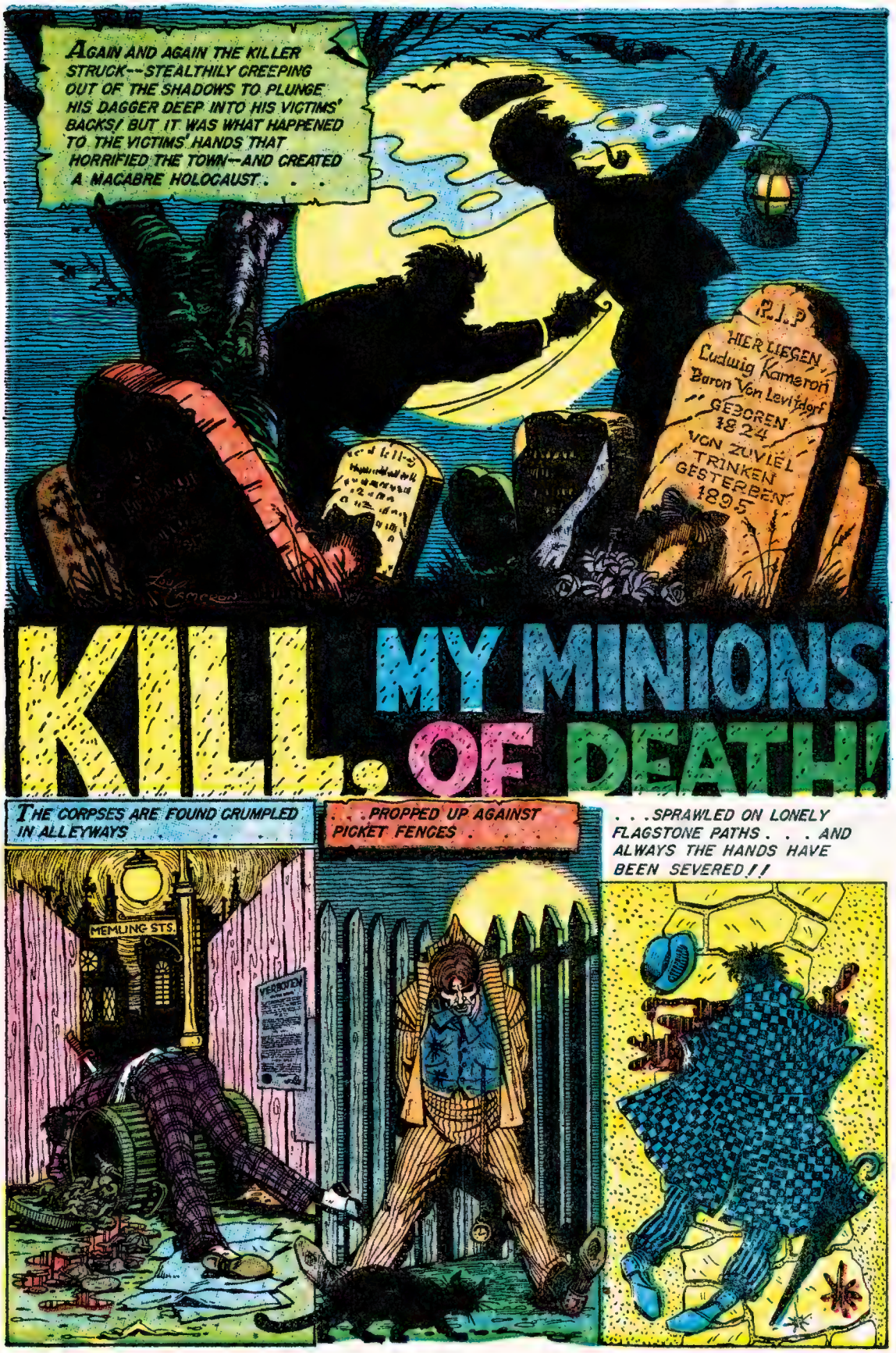

SAM, THIS ROOM IS A MESS! AND LOOK AT ALL THE BAD LUCK OMENS --A BROKEN MIRROR, A HAT ON THE BED, AN OPEN UMBRELLA INDOORS!
YOU'RE RIGHT, HONEY! I'LL HAVE THE PLACE CLEANED UP! BOY, WILL YOU--HEY! WHAT'S HE MUMBLING ABOUT BY THAT WINDOW?
WAIT! STOP, YOU IDIOT! DON'T JUMP!
UGH! WE WERE TOO LATE! HE JUMPED AND--HEY! WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM? NO SIGN OF HIM! HE--HE'S VANISHED!
HE SHOULD BE DOWN THERE IN THE COURTYARD, A CRUSHED HEAP-- BUT HE ISN'T!
SOMETHING SCREWY IS GOING ON AT THIS HOTEL AND WE'RE GETTING OUT RIGHT NOW. COME ON, SUGAR!
GETTING DIZZY... EVERYTHING'S... GOING BLACK!
AS SAM ALLISON, NOT KNOWING THAT HIS WIFE HAS FAINTED, STEPS OUT OF THE ROOM, A GUST OF WIND FROM THE OPEN WINDOW SLAMS THE DOOR SHUT...
SLAM!
WHA--??
GRACE! OPEN UP! WHAT'S THE TROUBLE? GRACE, WHY DON'T YOU ANSWER ME? GRACE!! I'D BETTER GO DOWN TO THE DESK AND GET A KEY!
BAM!
I RANG THE BELL FOR AN ELEVATOR, BUT NONE CAME. GRACE MAY HAVE HAD A HEART ATTACK OR SOMETHING JUST AS THE DOOR SLAMMED SHUT IN OUR ROOM!
SAY, THINGS LOOK DIFFERENT HERE IN THE LOBBY. THE SAME PEOPLE ARE HERE, BUT THEY SEEM ALIVE AND NORMAL! AND THERE'S A DIFFERENT DESK CLERK ON DUTY.
SWIFTLY, SAM ALLISON TOLD HIS STORY. THEN...
SORRY, SIR, BUT YOU MUST BE MISTAKEN! THERE WASN'T ANY OTHER CLERK ON HERE AT MIDNIGHT! WE HAVE NO BELLHOP ANSWERING THAT DESCRIPTION, EITHER! NOR DO WE HAVE ANY 13TH FLOOR, ACTUALLY, NOR A ROOM 1313! COULDN'T RENT IT. TOO MANY PEOPLE ARE SUPERSTITIOUS. SO, YOU SEE...
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S MISTAKEN. GIVE ME THE REGISTER. I'LL SHOW YOU!

THERE! NOW ARE YOU CONVINCED THAT YOU'RE NOT EVEN REGISTERED HERE?
I--I DON'T UNDERSTAND! THAT--THAT ISN'T EVEN THE SAME REGISTRY BOOK. YET, YOU SAY THERE IS NO OTHER!
I'M NOT GETTING ANYWHERES HERE. I'LL LEAVE THEN REENTER THE HOTEL THE BACK WAY! I'LL GET IN TO GRACE IF I HAVE TO SMASH THE DOOR DOWN!
A FEW MINUTES LATER, SAM ALLISON RETURNS TO FIND...
THERE IS A 13TH FLOOR! THAT STRANGE CLERK DOWNSTAIRS MUST'VE BEEN LYING! BUT WHY? WHAT'S THE ANGLE TO ALL THIS?
EXIT
13
THAT VOICE COMING FROM THE ROOM WHERE THE SUICIDE CLUB WAS HOLDING ITS PARTY--
OUR PROSPECTIVE NEW MEMBER, GRACE ALLISON, IS VERY PRETTY. WE'LL BE PROUD TO HAVE HER BECOME ONE OF US.
OPEN UP IN THERE! YOU'VE GOT MY WIFE! I WANT TO SEE HER! I-I'LL BREAK THE DOOR DOWN!
NO NEED OF THAT, MY FRIEND! WE'LL BE GLAD TO HAVE YOU JOIN US!
YOU ARRIVED JUST IN TIME TO WITNESS THE BEGINNING OF OUR FORMAL CEREMONIES.
THE BELLHOP AND THE ELEVATOR OPERATOR AND THE--THE DESK CLERK! THEY'VE ALL BECOME SKELETONS!
GRACE! WHAT ARE THEY DOING TO YOU?
LET ME GO, BLAST YOU!
BE CALM, MR. ALLISON! LET ME EXPLAIN! YOU SEE, THE ORIGINAL OWNER OF THIS HOTEL WAS A MAN LIKE YOURSELF, WHO DIDN'T BELIEVE IN SUPERSTITIONS! HE INCLUDED A 13TH FLOOR AND EVEN A ROOM 1313 IN THIS BUILDING!

BUT THEN A LOT OF FREAK, FATAL ACCIDENTS BEGAN TO HAPPEN ON THIS FLOOR-- AND PARTICULARLY IN ROOM 1313! AND ALSO TO THE OWNER'S FAMILY! THE HOTEL SOON EARNED A BAD REPUTATION, THE OWNER WENT BROKE AND INTO DEBT, WORRIED HIMSELF SICK!
I-- I DON'T CARE ABOUT ANY OF THAT! LET ME GET TO MY WIFE! SHE'S SO PALE, SO STILL!
THEN, SICK IN MIND, THIS HOTEL OWNER GATHERED TOGETHER A GROUP OF OTHER DEPRESSED MEN AND FORMED A SUICIDE CLUB! ON FRIDAY THE 13TH, THEY HELD A WILD PARTY, THEN ON THE STROKE OF MIDNIGHT, THEY ALL WENT TO ROOM 1313 AND FLUNG THEMSELVES FROM THE WINDOW IN A MASS SUICIDE!
NOW, EVERY YEAR ON FRIDAY THE 13TH, WE HOLD A REUNION HERE! AND, IF WE CAN GET A NEW VICTIM TO JOIN OUR GROUP, WE'LL ALL BE BROUGHT BACK TO LIFE FOR ONE MONTH!
YOU-- YOU'RE TRYING TO MAKE GRACE, MY WIFE, THAT VICTIM! NO! NO! YOU CAN'T!
BOOM
BOOM
DON'T BE TOO SURE! WATCH! RISE UP, GRACE ALLISON, NOW THAT YOU'VE HEARD OUR SUPERNATURAL INCANTATIONS! GO AND DO AS WE ORDERED!
THE SPELL HAS TAKEN EFFECT!
WAIT! STOP HER! LET ME GO! WHERE IS SHE? SHE'S WALKING RIGHT THROUGH THE DOOR!
NOTICE
I'VE GOT ONE HAND FREE! THERE'S SOMETHING IN MY POCKET, A GIFT FROM THE MINISTER WHO MARRIED GRACE AND ME, THAT MIGHT HAVE SOME POWER OVER THESE CURSED CREATURES!
THE GOOD BOOK! NO! NO! TAKE IT AWAY! IT IS THE ONE THING WE FEAR!
IT WORKED! I'M FREE! NOW TO GET TO GRACE!
BIBLE

NO SIGN OF GRACE! MY ONLY HOPE IS THAT SHE WENT BACK TO OUR ROOM!
NO ANSWER TO MY KNOCK! I-I'LL HAVE TO BREAK IT IN! OOFF!!
1313
GOOD GRIEF! SHE'S GOING TO JUMP! GRACE! NO! NO! WAIT! STOP!
LEAVE ME ALONE! I-I'VE GOT TO DO IT! SOME POWER BEYOND MY CONTROL IS COMPELLING ME TO DO IT! GET AWAY!
YOU CAN'T, GRACE. I WON'T LET YOU!
I--I HAVE TO DO THIS, DO SOMETHING TO SNAP HER OUT OF THE EVIL SPELL THEY'VE CAST UPON HER.
OOHHHH!!
SLAP!
THANK HEAVEN IT WORKED! SHE SNAPPED OUT OF IT!
I--SAM--WHAT HAPPENED? (SOB) I-I FEEL SO CONFUSED, DIZZY, SICK!
I--AFTER YOU LEFT THE ROOM, SAM, I MUST'VE FAINTED! THEN, WHEN I CAME TO, I SEEMED TO FEEL FAINT, SUFFOCATING. I--I WENT TO THE WINDOW TO GET SOME AIR AND--
IT'S ALL RIGHT NOW, DARLING. IT'S ALL RIGHT!
YOU SEEM AWFULLY UPSET, HONEY! DID SOMETHING HAPPEN WHILE I WAS PASSED OUT?
NO! IT'S ALL RIGHT, GRACE. FORGET IT!
SHE DOESN'T SEEM TO REMEMBER ANY OF THE OTHER. PERHAPS IT WILL BE BEST IF SHE NEVER KNOWS ABOUT IT.


SAM! LOOK! THE DOOR'S COMPLETELY DISAPPEARED! THERE ISN'T ANY ROOM 1313 ANY MORE.
Y-YES, I SEE! PLEASE, LET'S NOT TRY TO FIGURE IT OUT NOW, DEAR! LET'S JUST GET OUT OF HERE!
AFTER RINGING AND WAITING FOR AN ELEVATOR TO STOP, SAM AND GRACE DECIDED TO USE THE STAIRS. OUT IN THE STAIRWELL, THEY DISCOVERED...
IT HAPPENED HERE, TOO. THERE IS NO ENTRANCE TO THE 13TH FLOOR! IT'S BEEN SEALED UP!
I- I CAN'T STAND MUCH MORE OF THIS. PLEASE LET'S HURRY AND GET AWAY FROM HERE, SAM!
SAM, THE LOBBY LOOKS DIFFERENT NOW!
SHH! DON'T STOP TO TALK NOW! LET'S GET OUT OF HERE FIRST!
WE'LL GO RIGHT TO THE STATION, GRACE! WE'LL HEAD FOR THE LONG ISLAND SHORE TO SPEND THE REST OF OUR HONEYMOON.
HOTE
J-894
HOW'D YOU FOLKS ENJOY YOUR STAY AT THE MARTA? STRANGE PLACE. MOST PEOPLE DON'T KNOW THE HISTORY OF THE HOTEL OR THEY PROBABLY WOULDN'T PUT UP THERE!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
SOME YEARS AGO, THE ORIGINAL OWNER WENT BROKE. HE AND A BUNCH OF GLOOMY INVESTORS FORMED SOME KIND OF A SUICIDE CLUB. THEY ALL MYSTERIOUSLY VANISHED FROM A PARTY THEY WERE HOLDING ONE NIGHT. NO TRACE OF THEM WAS EVER FOUND. 13TH FLOOR WAS SEALED UP AFTER THAT. NEVER BEEN USED SINCE. STRANGE, EH?
A FEW MOMENTS LATER, THE DRIVER HANDED BACK THE EVENING PAPER FOR THEM TO READ..
OOH! IS--IS THIS TONIGHT'S PAPER? WHY, IT'S DATED THE 14TH!
OF COURSE, LADY! THAT'S TODAY'S DATE! SATURDAY, THE 14TH!
NEW YO
DID-- DID YOU HEAR THAT, SAM? WE- WE LOST A WHOLE DAY, THERE AT THE HOTEL! THERE'S MORE TO WHAT HAPPENED THAN YOU'VE TOLD ME!
YES! MAYBE SOMEDAY I'LL TELL YOU THE WHOLE STORY, BUT RIGHT NOW, ALL I CAN SAY IS THAT I'LL NEVER KID YOU AGAIN ABOUT YOUR SUPERSTITIONS!


AGAIN AND AGAIN THE KILLER STRUCK--STEALTHILY CREEPING OUT OF THE SHADOWS TO PLUNGE HIS DAGGER DEEP INTO HIS VICTIMS' BACKS! BUT IT WAS WHAT HAPPENED TO THE VICTIMS' HANDS THAT HORRIFIED THE TOWN--AND CREATED A MACABRE HOLOCAUST . . .
R.I.P
HIER LIEGEN
Ludwig Kameron
Baron Von Levitzdorf
GEBOREN
1824
VON ZUVIEL
TRINKEN
GESTERBEN
1895
KILL, MY MINIONS OF DEATH!
THE CORPSES ARE FOUND CRUMPLED IN ALLEYWAYS . . .
. . . PROPPED UP AGAINST PICKET FENCES . . .
. . . SPRAWLED ON LONELY FLAGSTONE PATHS . . . AND ALWAYS THE HANDS HAVE BEEN SEVERED!!
MEMLING STS.
VERBOTEN

Baffling Mysteries #17, September 1953. Artist: Lou Cameron

WHAT IS THE MOTIVE BEHIND THESE MACABRE MURDERS . . .? WHAT DOES THE MURDERER DO WITH THE SEVERED HANDS . . .? OVER AND OVER AGAIN, THE POLICE OFFICIALS HEAR THESE QUESTIONS ECHOED MOCKINGLY .

NEVER HAVE I SEEN SUCH WIDESPREAD TERROR! IF WE DO NOT CATCH THIS MADMAN SOON, THE PEOPLE WILL BE GROVELING IN THE STREETS!

WE HAVE ROUNDED UP EVERY KNOWN CRIMINAL, INSPECTOR . . . AND ALL OUR INFORMERS. BUT STILL THERE ARE NO CLUES.

THEN . . . AS MYSTERIOUSLY AS THEY STARTED . . . THE KILLINGS STOP! MONTHS PASS . . . BUT THE PEOPLE REMAIN GRIPPED IN A VICE OF HORROR. EVERY NIGHT, WHEN DARKNESS ENSHROUDS THE LAND, THE PEOPLE SHUN THE SHADOWY STREETS. THEY SIT BEHIND HEAVILY CURTAINED WINDOWS, REMEMBERING, AND STARING MUTELY AT THEIR TREMBLING HANDS . . .

HIGH ON A MOUNTAIN IN ONE OF THE NORTHERN PROVINCES, STANDS A LONELY WINDSWEPT HOUSE . . . INSIDE, WORKING FEVERISHLY, IS THE MURDERER!

HIS NAME IS IVAN BULOFF . . .

AGAIN FRITZ HAS DROPPED A FLASK! BUT I MUST BE PATIENT . . . IF HE WERE BRIGHTER, HE WOULD ASK MORE QUESTIONS ABOUT WHERE I GOT THE HANDS . . .

STAND BACK, FRITZ--GET OUT OF THE WAY! THE SERUM IS READY! I AM ABOUT TO INJECT IT INTO THE FIRST PAIR OF HANDS!

THERE--IT'S DONE! NOW FREE THE DOG FROM THE CAGE, FRITZ. PUSH IT FORWARD SO IT STANDS RIGHT UNDER THE LAMP.

W--WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?

WATCH, FRITZ! WATCH HOW I HOLD THE HANDS BY THE WRISTS . . . WATCH HOW I STARE AT THE CUR'S MANGY NECK . . . AND WATCH HOW THE SEVERED HANDS WRENCH THEMSELVES FREE AND SAIL SLOWLY FORWARD THROUGH THE AIR . . .

POOR FRITZ'S ADDLED BRAIN REELS WITH HORROR AS THE HANDS ENCIRCLE THE CRINGING DOG'S NECK!
OWWWW!
MAGNIFICENT! I COULD NOT HAVE ASKED FOR A BETTER RESULT!! THE FIRST PART OF MY EXPERIMENT IS AN UNQUALIFIED SUCCESS!
BUT THE DOG -- IT IS DEAD!
I DO NOT UNDERSTAND...THOSE HANDS--HOW DID THEY KILL? AND WHY...?
FRITZ, MY BOY, YOU WOULD NOT UNDERSTAND IF I TOLD YOU! THAT, MY DIM-WITTED YOUNG FRIEND, IS PRECISELY WHY I CHOSE YOU TO BE MY ASSISTANT... NOW GO TO SLEEP--AND DO NOT WORRY ABOUT WHAT DOES NOT CONCERN YOU.
THE NEXT NIGHT..BULOFF WAITS IN THE SHADOWS, TENSELY GRIPPING A PAIR OF SEVERED HANDS . . .
SOMEONE'S COMING...ANY SECOND NOW I SHALL LEARN THE RESULTS OF THE SECOND PART OF MY EXPERIMENT! I SHALL LEARN IF THE SEVERED HANDS OBEY MY COMMAND TO KILL HUMAN BEINGS!
KILL, HANDS, KILL...!
EEEEK!
A SUCCESS! A TOTAL SUCCESS!!
BULOFF!
W--WHO'S THERE?!
3

FRITZ, I—I THOUGHT YOU WERE LOCKED IN YOUR ROOM!

I CLIMBED OUT THE WINDOW...ALL LAST NIGHT I COULDN'T SLEEP AFTER I SAW THAT DOG DIE! TODAY I SLIPPED DOWN TO THE VILLAGE—I HEARD TALES THERE—AND REALIZED HOW YOU'VE BEEN GETTING THE HANDS! NOT FROM MORGUES, LIKE YOU TOLD ME, BUT BY KILLING...!

BUT POOR FRITZ'S ANGER HAS EXPOSED HIM TO A HORRIBLE DEATH . . .

KILL, HANDS, KILL...!

AAARRRRGGGH!

AND A MOMENT LATER, HIS LIPS ARE SEALED FOREVER!

THE NEXT MORNING . . .

NOW ALL I HAVE TO DO IS MAIL THIS LETTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER, AND— WHO'S THAT COMING UP THE PATH ? IT'S FRITZ'S SISTER— GRETCHEN!

GOOD DAY, HERR BULOFF. I HAVE COME WITH FRESH CLOTHING FOR MY BROTHER.

I SENT FRITZ TO THE CITY. HE MAY BE THERE SEVERAL DAYS. HE'S BUYING SUPPLIES FOR ME.

FRITZ TO THE CITY ?! BUT HE HAS NEVER BEEN THERE BEFORE... AND HE GETS CONFUSED SO EASILY...OH, HERR BULOFF, I HOPE MY POOR BROTHER DOESN'T GET LOST!

I SAID THE WRONG THING! I'LL HAVE TO DISTRACT HER SOMEHOW...I'LL WALK HER BACK TO THE VILLAGE— I WANT TO MAIL THE LETTER ANYWAY— AND BUY HER SOME BAUBLE...

LATER . . .

IT IS NOTHING BUT MIRROR-GLASS— BUT HER EYES GLOW AS IF IT WERE THE RAREST DIAMOND!

HOW DO YOU LIKE IT, MY DEAR ?

YOU ARE SO KIND, HERR BULOFF— I HAVE NEVER HAD ANYTHING SO BEAUTIFUL! I SHALL WEAR IT FOREVER!

JUW ELER
UND GOLDCHMIED

BULOFF'S LETTER HAS TRAVELLED SWIFTLY... AND THE NEXT MORNING FINDS THE PRIME MINISTER'S BROW FURROWED WITH PUZZLEMENT . . .

IT IS TEN O'CLOCK NOW, YOUR EXCELLENCY.

THE MAN MUST BE A MANIAC! HE DEMANDS HALF THE PUBLIC TREASURY IN EXCHANGE FOR A PROMISE NOT TO LET THE SEVERED HANDS LOOSE ON THE POPULACE! HE SAYS I WILL UNDERSTAND CLEARLY WHAT HE MEANS IF I LOOK OUT THE WINDOW AT EXACTLY TEN O'CLOCK THIS MORNING...

THE PRIME MINISTER MOVES SWIFTLY TO THE WINDOW. AT FIRST HE SEES NOTHING. THEN, SUDDENLY, HIS EYES BULGE WITH HORROR . . .

. . . AS HE WATCHES THE SENTRY BELOW BEING SLOWLY THROTTLED BY A PAIR OF SEVERED HANDS!

BUT THE PRIME MINISTER IS A MAN OF ACTION. AND SHORTLY AFTERWARDS . . .

HOW SOON CAN YOU DISPATCH AN INFANTRY PLATOON TO CAPTURE THE MOST DANGEROUS MAN IN THE COUNTRY? HIS ADDRESS IS ON THIS ENVELOPE!

WE'LL HAVE HIM WITHIN AN HOUR, SIR!

WITHIN THE HOUR...

OPEN UP IN THERE—OR WE'LL SMASH OUR WAY IN!!

ABOVE THE LIEUTENANT'S HEAD, A WINDOW OPENS CREAKINGLY . . .

SO THE PRIME MINISTER NEEDS SOME MORE CONVINCING...!

KILL, HANDS, KILL!

BACK AT THE PALACE, THE PRIME MINISTER WAITS IMPATIENTLY FOR THE PLATOON TO REPORT
WHAT COULD BE KEEPING THEM?
THERE'S SOMEONE AT THE DOOR NOW!
WHO ARE YOU? HOW DID YOU GET PAST MY GUARD?
MY NAME IS IVAN BULOFF. YOUR EXCELLENCY RECEIVED MY LETTER THIS MORNING. AND THEN YOUR EXCELLENCY WAS SO KIND AS TO SEND SOME SOLDIERS TO MY HOUSE. I WELCOMED THEM, SIR. I AND MY HANDS OF DEATH WELCOMED THEM...
..JUST AS WE SHALL WELCOME OTHERS IF YOU CONTINUE TO RESIST.. GIVE UP, EXCELLENCY--THE HANDS ARE INVINCIBLE! YEARS OF EXPERIMENTS, PLUS A KNOWLEGE OF BLACK MAGIC, HAVE ENABLED ME TO CREATE A SERUM THAT CONNECTS THE HANDS WITH MY OPTIC NERVE AND WILL TO KILL! ALL I NEED DO IS STARE AT A LIVING OBJECT'S NECK, THEN WILL THAT OBJECT'S DEATH—AND THE HANDS DO MY BIDDING .!
BUT WHAT IS TO PREVENT ME FROM HAVING YOU SHOT WHILE YOU SLEEP?
VERY SIMPLE ...GUARD! COME AT ONCE! THIS IS BULOFF CALLING!
SEE. THE ARMY WAS--HOW SHALL I SAY IT?--VERY IMPRESSED BY THE RESULTS OF THE BATTLE BETWEEN YOUR PLATOON AND THE SEVERED HANDS. YOUR SOLDIERS WERE KILLED, EXCELLENCY--AND THE REST OF THE ARMY HAS GONE OVER TO ME!
EVEN AS I SPEAK, THE HANDS CLOSE IN ABOUT YOUR THROATS...WELL, EXCELLENCY, DO YOU WISH TO ANGER ME? SHALL I GIVE MY COMMAND...?
P—PLEASE EXCELLENCY--DO ANYTHING HE SAYS!
AND SO BULOFF BECOMES THE POWER BEHIND THE GOVERNMENT! GREAT RICHES .A CASTLE .A HUGE LABORATORY...ALL BELONG NOW TO HIM--TO IVAN BULOFF AND HIS SEVERED HANDS OF DEATH!
HOO'S

ONE DAY, MONTHS LATER, BULOFF SAUNTERS TOWARD HIS OLD HOUSE ON THE MOUNTAIN . . . .

UGHHH---LOOK AT THE SHACK! YOU'VE GONE A LONG WAY, IVAN BULOFF. YOU HAVE CERTAINLY GONE A LONG WAY . . . .

BULOFF!

WHO ARE YOU?!

I AM GRETCHEN, SIR--FRITZ'S SISTER. SEE--I STILL WEAR THE BEAUTIFUL JEWEL THAT YOU BOUGHT FOR ME . . . FRITZ NEVER CAME BACK FROM THE CITY, SIR. I HAVE BEEN WAITING AND WAITING . . .

THESE DAYS, IVAN BULOFF'S ARROGANCE IS AS LIMITLESS AS HIS POWER . . . .

THEN WAIT 'TIL DOOMSDAY, FOOL! YOUR BROTHER IS DEAD! I KILLED HIM!

NO! NO!

THAT IS WHAT THE VILLAGERS TOLD ME--BUT I DID NOT BELIEVE THEM! NOW YOU SHALL PAY FOR MY BROTHER'S DEATH . . .

THE FOOL THINKS SHE CAN HARM ME! ALL I HAVE TO DO IS STARE AT HER THROAT AND . . . .

KILL, HANDS, KILL . . . !

BUT THE MAD GENIUS HAS BEEN STARING AT THE REFLECTED IMAGE OF **HIMSELF** IN THE MIRROR-GLASS PENDANT THAT HANGS ON POOR GRETCHEN'S NECK. AND SO . . .

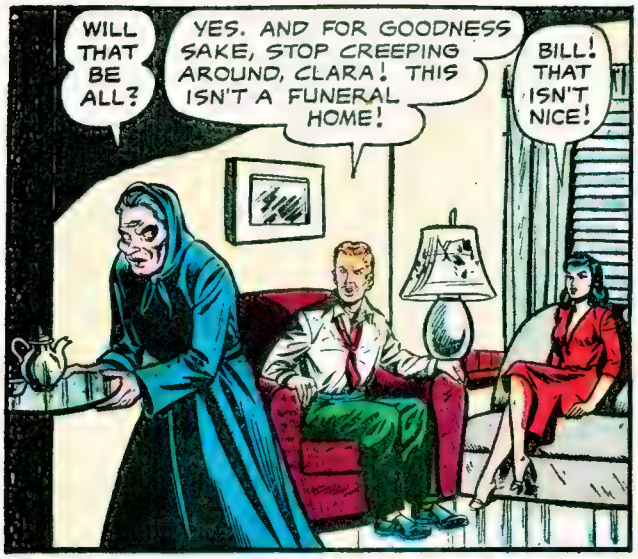
AT THE MOMENT BULOFF DIES, THE HANDS BEGIN FALLING . . . DOWN FROM HIS THROAT, DOWN FROM THE RACKS IN HIS LABORATORY, DOWN FROM THE SHELVES IN HIS PALACE . . . THE HANDS FALL TO THE GROUND WHERE THEY LIE, LIFELESS, LIKE EMPTY CRUMPLED GLOVES . . . AND THE SCOURGE OF TERROR IS LIFTED FROM THE LAND!!

THE END

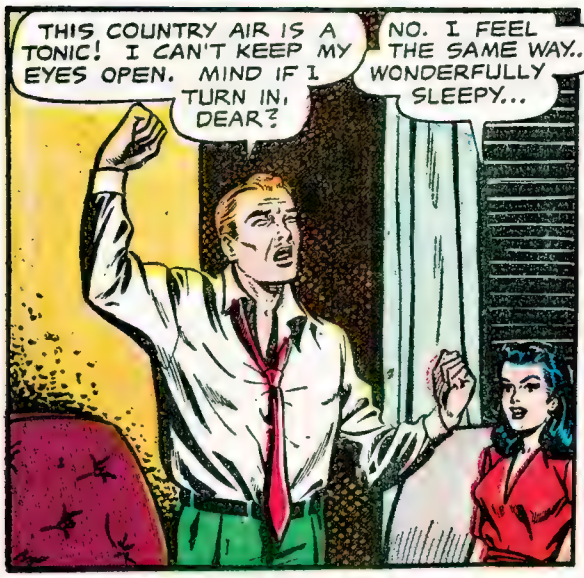
Her Lips Dripped BLOOD
OUT OF A FEARFUL, HAUNTING PAST CAME A SHADOW THAT TOOK FORM AND BECAME A NIGHTMARE OF REALITY, TOO DEADLY TO DESTROY BY MERE MORTAL MEANS!
MY WIFE'S FAMILY DATED WAY BACK IN NEW ENGLAND HISTORY, AND WHEN WE DECIDED TO MOVE FROM THE CITY TO THE COUNTRY, WE HAD A STRANGE STREAK OF LUCK...
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT, BILL! THE VERY HOMESTEAD MY ANCESTORS LIVED IN!
IT IS CURIOUS, HONEY!
I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE THE INSIDE...
HOPE THERE'S NONE OF THOSE CREATURES ROAMING AROUND THAT THE VILLAGERS TOLD US ABOUT!

Journey Into Fear #15, September 1953. Artist: Jerry Iger shop

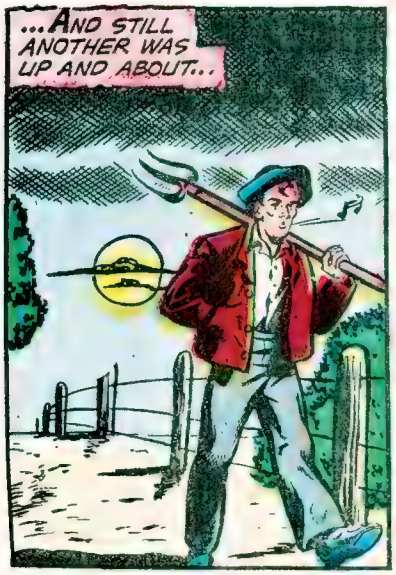
OF COURSE I WAS ONLY JOKING ABOUT THE SILLY TALES WE HEARD, BUT THE THOUGHTS OF MEETING THE ANCIENT HOUSEKEEPER SOMEHOW MADE ME FEEL UNEASY...
SHE'S TOO OLD TO BE OF ANY SERVICE. WE'LL JUST HAVE TO...
BILL! LOOK!
WELCOME. MAY YOU ENJOY THE HOUSE... AS LONG AS YOU LIVE IN IT. I'M CLARA... THE HOUSEKEEPER!
LET'S CUT THIS SHORT, BETTY. NONE OF US ARE ENJOYING IT!
THANK YOU, CLARA, WE'LL CALL YOU IF WE NEED YOU...
CLARA MANAGED TO AVOID US AS MUCH AS WE DID HER— BUT HER PRESENCE WAS FELT EVERYWHERE. MAYBE THAT'S WHAT EVEN GAVE BETTY THE IDEA TO GO EXPLORING IN THE OLD GRAVE-YARD...
AFTER ALL, IT IS OUT OF RESPECT THAT I WANT TO VISIT MY ANCESTORS' RESTING PLACE, DEAR...
I THINK IT'S JUST CURIOSITY. BUT HERE WE ARE...
HERE LIES LINDA WATTS 1897-1923
A WEREWOLF! JUST LIKE THE VILLAGERS SAID...
MY GRAND-FATHER!
HERE LIES A WEREWOLF
THAT MEANS HE WAS KILLED! SOMEONE SHOULD PAY FOR SUCH A DREADFUL THING!
IT'S BARBARIC! C'MON. LET'S GET OUT OF THIS PLACE!
WER

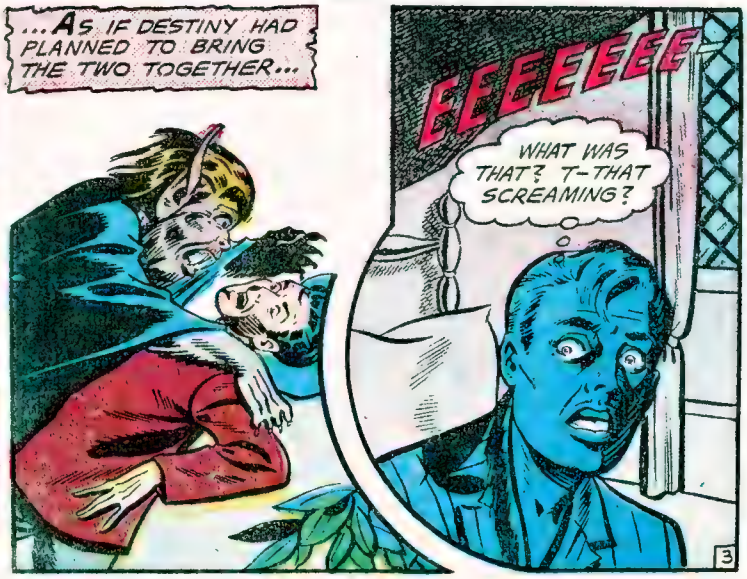

WILL THAT BE ALL?
YES. AND FOR GOODNESS SAKE, STOP CREEPING AROUND, CLARA! THIS ISN'T A FUNERAL HOME!
BILL! THAT ISN'T NICE!

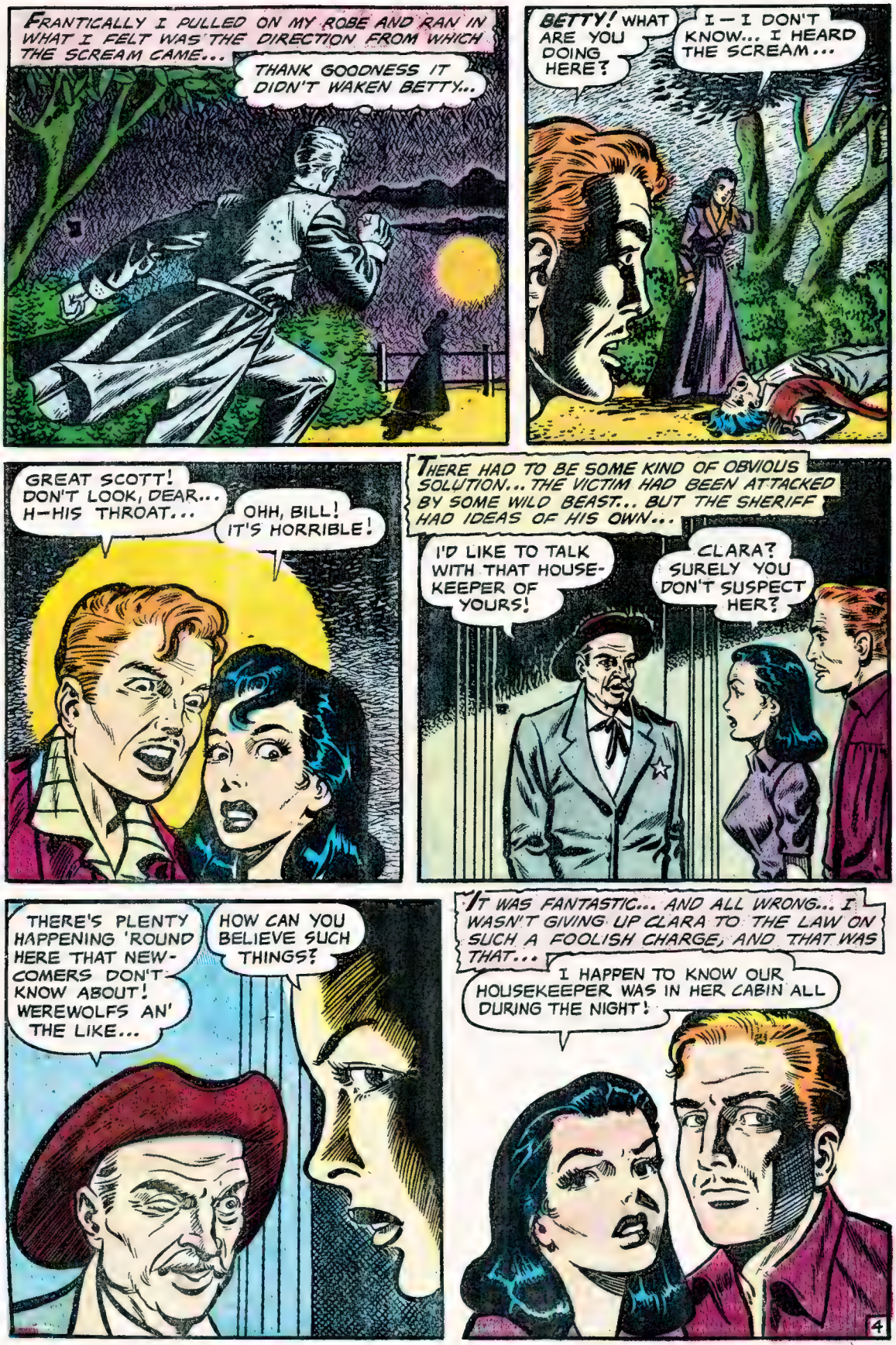
SHE GIVES ME THE CREEPS! LET'S GET RID OF HER!
SHAME ON YOU, TALKING ABOUT AN OLD WOMAN LIKE THAT!


THIS COUNTRY AIR IS A TONIC! I CAN'T KEEP MY EYES OPEN. MIND IF I TURN IN, DEAR?
NO. I FEEL THE SAME WAY... WONDERFULLY SLEEPY...

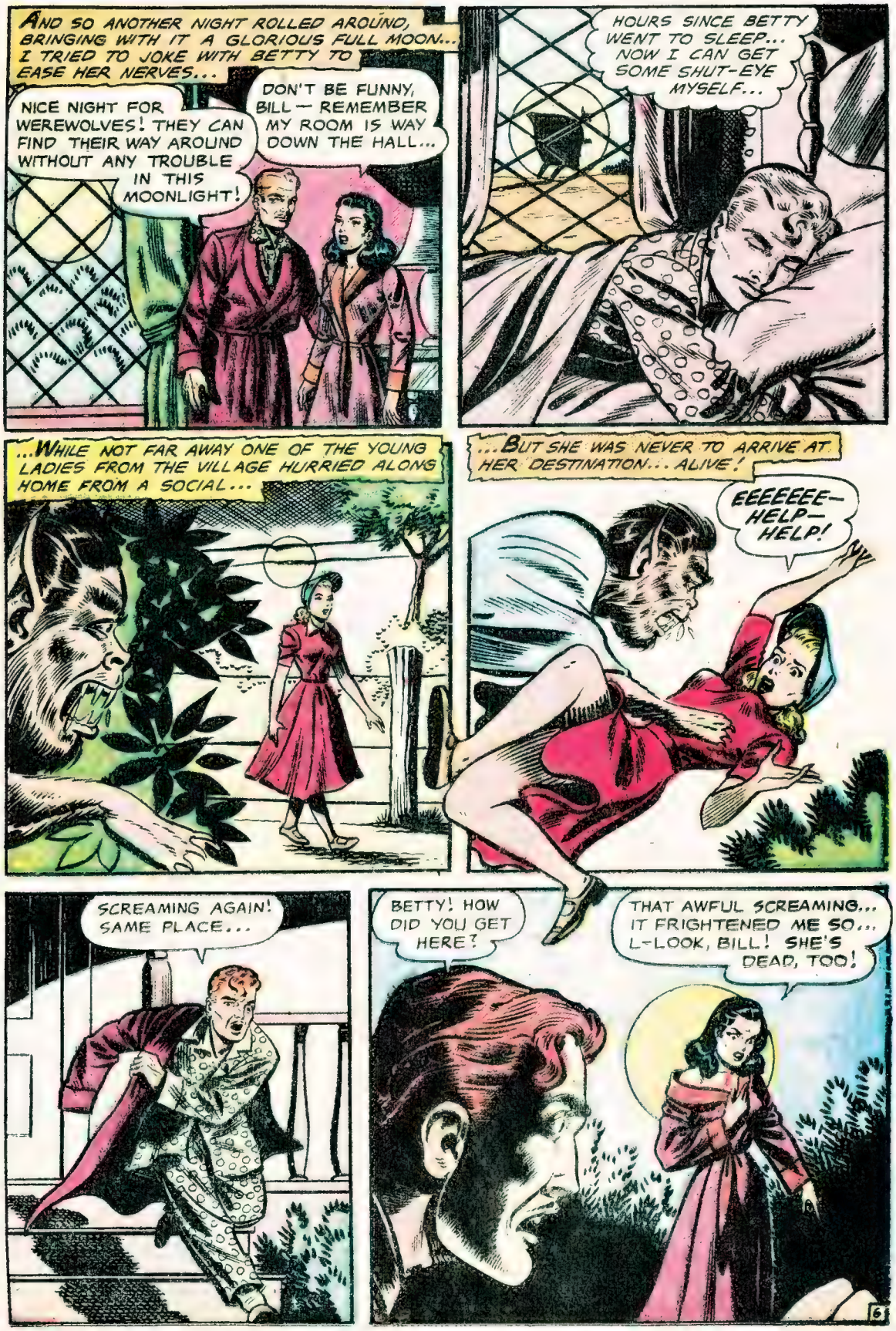
...BUT THE PEACE THAT BETTY AND I FELT WAS NOT FOR EVERYONE... AS UNDER THE FULL NEW ENGLAND MOON A RESTLESS CREATURE HURRIED ALONG A WINDING ROAD...

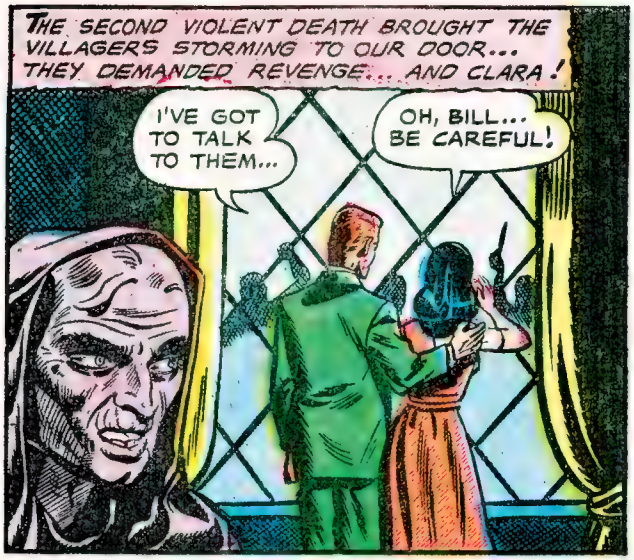

...AND STILL ANOTHER WAS UP AND ABOUT...

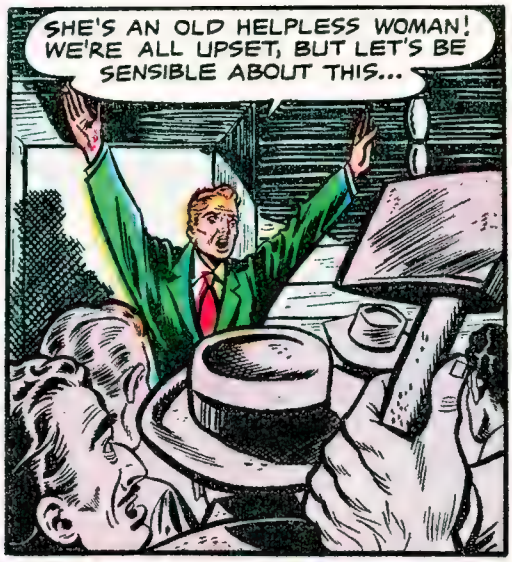

...AS IF DESTINY HAD PLANNED TO BRING THE TWO TOGETHER...
EEEEEEE
WHAT WAS THAT? T-THAT SCREAMING?
3

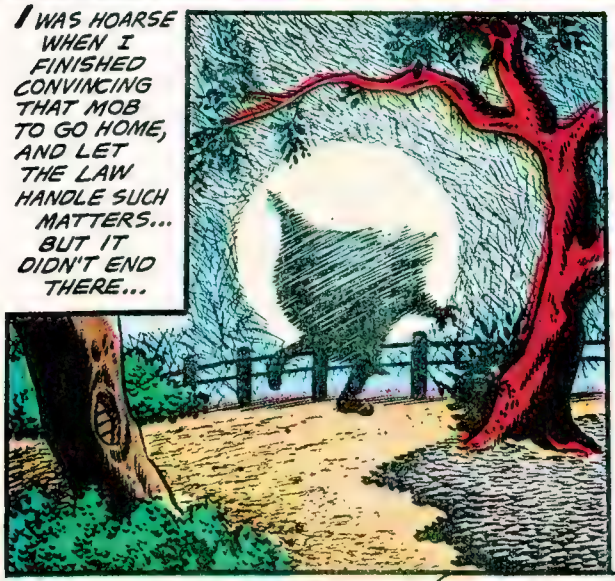

FRANTICALLY I PULLED ON MY ROBE AND RAN IN WHAT I FELT WAS THE DIRECTION FROM WHICH THE SCREAM CAME...
THANK GOODNESS IT DIDN'T WAKEN BETTY...
BETTY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
I — I DON'T KNOW... I HEARD THE SCREAM...
GREAT SCOTT! DON'T LOOK, DEAR... H—HIS THROAT...
OHH, BILL! IT'S HORRIBLE!
THERE HAD TO BE SOME KIND OF OBVIOUS SOLUTION... THE VICTIM HAD BEEN ATTACKED BY SOME WILD BEAST... BUT THE SHERIFF HAD IDEAS OF HIS OWN...
I'D LIKE TO TALK WITH THAT HOUSE-KEEPER OF YOURS!
CLARA? SURELY YOU DON'T SUSPECT HER?
THERE'S PLENTY HAPPENING 'ROUND HERE THAT NEW-COMERS DON'T KNOW ABOUT! WEREWOLFS AN' THE LIKE...
HOW CAN YOU BELIEVE SUCH THINGS?
IT WAS FANTASTIC... AND ALL WRONG... I WASN'T GIVING UP CLARA TO THE LAW ON SUCH A FOOLISH CHARGE, AND THAT WAS THAT...
I HAPPEN TO KNOW OUR HOUSEKEEPER WAS IN HER CABIN ALL DURING THE NIGHT!

BETTY INSISTED ON BEING RE-ASSURED THAT THE GRIM REMAINS HAD BEEN TAKEN AWAY... MORBID THOUGH IT WAS, I SHOWED HER...
THE BODY IS NO DOUBT IN A MORGUE.
IT'S HORRIBLE...
NOW YOU'VE GOT TO STOP THINKING ABOUT IT, DEAR, AND GET SOME SLEEP!
HOW CAN I? I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO REST AGAIN...
PERHAPS THIS WILL HELP...
IT'S A SOOTHING HERB TEA, M'AM...
TAKE IT AWAY! MAKE HER GO AWAY FROM ME, BILL!
YOU HEARD MY WIFE...
TAKE THAT STUFF AWAY, CLARA! AND DON'T MAKE ANY MORE!
AS YOU SAY, SIR...
I'M SO AFRAID...
LOOK, DEAR... IT'S DAYLIGHT... NO HARM CAN COME TO YOU... I'M HERE...
FINALLY, BETTY FELL INTO A DEEP SLUMBER, AND AS I SAT AND WATCHED HER, I TRIED TO PUT THE PIECES OF THE DREADFUL MYSTERY TOGETHER...
COULD IT BE SOMETHING NOT HUMAN DOING THESE THINGS?

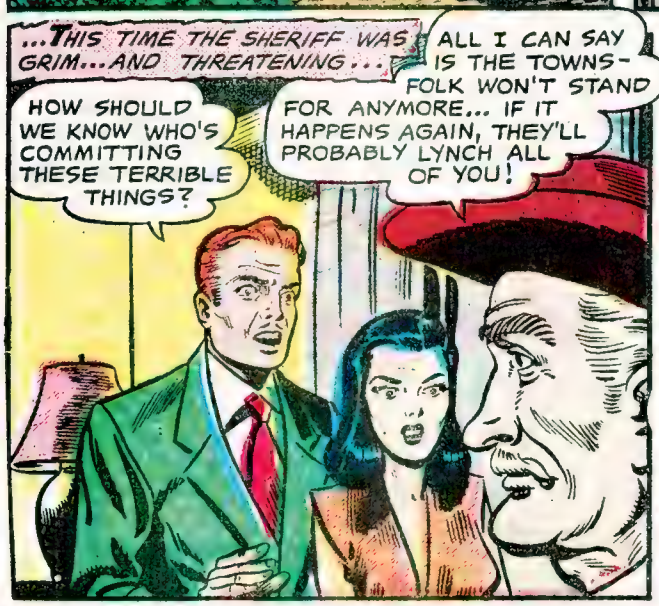

AND SO ANOTHER NIGHT ROLLED AROUND, BRINGING WITH IT A GLORIOUS FULL MOON... I TRIED TO JOKE WITH BETTY TO EASE HER NERVES...
NICE NIGHT FOR WEREWOLVES! THEY CAN FIND THEIR WAY AROUND WITHOUT ANY TROUBLE IN THIS MOONLIGHT!
DON'T BE FUNNY, BILL — REMEMBER MY ROOM IS WAY DOWN THE HALL...
HOURS SINCE BETTY WENT TO SLEEP... NOW I CAN GET SOME SHUT-EYE MYSELF...
...WHILE NOT FAR AWAY ONE OF THE YOUNG LADIES FROM THE VILLAGE HURRIED ALONG HOME FROM A SOCIAL...
...BUT SHE WAS NEVER TO ARRIVE AT HER DESTINATION... ALIVE!
EEEEEEEE— HELP— HELP!
SCREAMING AGAIN! SAME PLACE...
BETTY! HOW DID YOU GET HERE?
THAT AWFUL SCREAMING... IT FRIGHTENED ME SO... L-LOOK, BILL! SHE'S DEAD, TOO!
6


THE SECOND VIOLENT DEATH BROUGHT THE VILLAGERS STORMING TO OUR DOOR... THEY DEMANDED REVENGE... AND CLARA!
I'VE GOT TO TALK TO THEM...
OH, BILL... BE CAREFUL!


SHE'S AN OLD HELPLESS WOMAN! WE'RE ALL UPSET, BUT LET'S BE SENSIBLE ABOUT THIS...


I WAS HOARSE WHEN I FINISHED CONVINCING THAT MOB TO GO HOME, AND LET THE LAW HANDLE SUCH MATTERS... BUT IT DIDN'T END THERE...

AGAIN! THIS PLACE IS EVIL! HORRIBLE!
AIE-E-E-E-E

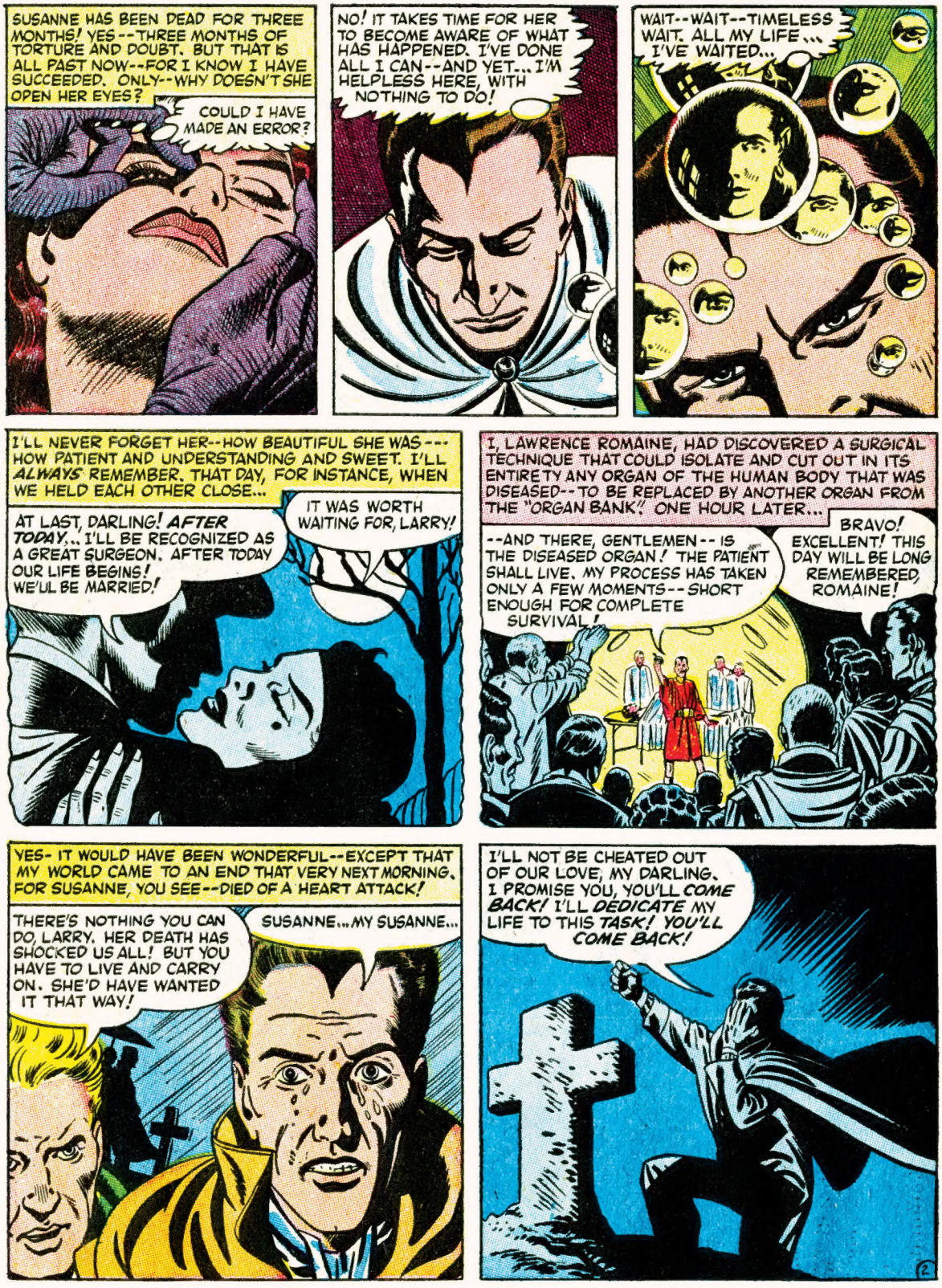

...THIS TIME THE SHERIFF WAS GRIM...AND THREATENING...
ALL I CAN SAY IS THE TOWNSFOLK WON'T STAND FOR ANYMORE... IF IT HAPPENS AGAIN, THEY'LL PROBABLY LYNCH ALL OF YOU!
HOW SHOULD WE KNOW WHO'S COMMITTING THESE TERRIBLE THINGS?

IF IT WILL HELP, I WILL STAND GUARD TONIGHT... AT CLARA'S CABIN... THOUGH I KNOW SHE'S INNOCENT!

WEREWOLF HUNTING WAS A NEW ONE TO ME, BUT I PREPARED MYSELF... SILVER BULLETS AND ALL... POOR BETTY WAS FRANTIC WITH FEAR AND WORRY...
PLEASE LET ME GO WITH YOU, DEAR.
YOU GET SOME SLEEP. I'M ONLY DOING THIS TO PROVE A POINT TO THE SHERIFF.
BUT IF YOU INSIST, HONEY... YOU LOOK TOO SCARED TO LEAVE ALONE.
I AM, BILL. AND I'M SCARED FOR YOU, TOO...
WHERE SHALL WE HIDE? SHE'LL SEE US.
OVER THERE IN THE BUSHES. QUIET NOW!
OH, BILL! THERE SHE IS!
AT THIS HOUR OF THE NIGHT! THEN IT IS CLARA! SHE'S THE WEREWOLF!
I WAS JUST ABOUT TO PRESS ON THE TRIGGER WHEN I HEARD A GHASTLY GROWL BEHIND ME...
WHA...
KILL... KILL!
B-BETTY! OH, NO... NOT YOU! YOU— THE WEREWOLF!
6

PLEASE! MY WIFE! BETTY... YOU'RE MY WIFE!
I'M GOING TO KILL YOU...
I BEGGED THE CREATURE TO KEEP AWAY, BUT MY VOICE WAS UNHEEDED... I HAD NO CHOICE... I AIMED THE GUN...
...I WAS TOO STUNNED TO MOVE... THE BEAST AT MY FEET WAS DEAD... THE MOONLIGHT PLAYED ACROSS ITS UGLY FACE...
...BUT THEN A TRANSFORMATION TOOK PLACE, AND I KNEW IT WAS NO NIGHTMARE... FOR I LOOKED DOWN AT THE BEAUTIFUL FACE OF MY BELOVED WIFE...
CLARA MUST HAVE GONE FOR THE SHERIFF... I LEFT HER DO THE TALKING... SHE HAD WITNESSED THE WHOLE THING... THE SHERIFF'S VOICE WAS GENTLE NOW... NO MORE THREATS... NO MORE SUSPICIONS...
TERRIBLE THING FOR THE POOR FELLOW... SORRY WE THOUGHT IT WAS YOU, OLD CLARA...
I JUST HAPPENED TO NEED WATER FROM THE WELL... I SAW IT ALL ...
I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN... SHE WAS THE THIRD GENERATION... THANK GOODNESS IT STOPPED WHERE IT DID...
THE END

Chamber of Chills #23, May 1954. Pencils: Manny Stallman; inks: John Giunta


SUSANNE HAS BEEN DEAD FOR THREE MONTHS! YES--THREE MONTHS OF TORTURE AND DOUBT. BUT THAT IS ALL PAST NOW--FOR I KNOW I HAVE SUCCEEDED. ONLY--WHY DOESN'T SHE OPEN HER EYES?
COULD I HAVE MADE AN ERROR?
NO! IT TAKES TIME FOR HER TO BECOME AWARE OF WHAT HAS HAPPENED. I'VE DONE ALL I CAN--AND YET... I'M HELPLESS HERE, WITH NOTHING TO DO!
WAIT--WAIT--TIMELESS WAIT. ALL MY LIFE... I'VE WAITED...
I'LL NEVER FORGET HER--HOW BEAUTIFUL SHE WAS--- HOW PATIENT AND UNDERSTANDING AND SWEET. I'LL ALWAYS REMEMBER. THAT DAY, FOR INSTANCE, WHEN WE HELD EACH OTHER CLOSE...
AT LAST, DARLING! AFTER TODAY... I'LL BE RECOGNIZED AS A GREAT SURGEON. AFTER TODAY OUR LIFE BEGINS! WE'LL BE MARRIED!
IT WAS WORTH WAITING FOR, LARRY!
I, LAWRENCE ROMAINE, HAD DISCOVERED A SURGICAL TECHNIQUE THAT COULD ISOLATE AND CUT OUT IN ITS ENTIRETY ANY ORGAN OF THE HUMAN BODY THAT WAS DISEASED--TO BE REPLACED BY ANOTHER ORGAN FROM THE "ORGAN BANK". ONE HOUR LATER...
--AND THERE, GENTLEMEN--IS THE DISEASED ORGAN! THE PATIENT SHALL LIVE. MY PROCESS HAS TAKEN ONLY A FEW MOMENTS--SHORT ENOUGH FOR COMPLETE SURVIVAL!
BRAVO! EXCELLENT! THIS DAY WILL BE LONG REMEMBERED, ROMAINE!
YES- IT WOULD HAVE BEEN WONDERFUL--EXCEPT THAT MY WORLD CAME TO AN END THAT VERY NEXT MORNING. FOR SUSANNE, YOU SEE--DIED OF A HEART ATTACK!
THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO, LARRY. HER DEATH HAS SHOCKED US ALL! BUT YOU HAVE TO LIVE AND CARRY ON. SHE'D HAVE WANTED IT THAT WAY!
SUSANNE...MY SUSANNE...
I'LL NOT BE CHEATED OUT OF OUR LOVE, MY DARLING. I PROMISE YOU, YOU'LL COME BACK! I'LL DEDICATE MY LIFE TO THIS TASK! YOU'LL COME BACK!

PERHAPS MY MIND DID CRACK... BUT MY CONVICTIONS WERE NEVER STRONGER OR SANER--I TOILED FOR DAYS PREPARING THE NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS. AND THEN --ONE WEEK AFTERWARDS--I ACTED!

THIS NEW *CADAVER* HAS ONLY BEEN RECENTLY *BURIED!* IT'S JUST THE *RIGHT BODY* I'M *LOOKING* FOR!

THE *HEART!* STRONG...DURABLE!

DISCOVERIES. GREAT ONES, BUT YET SECRET ONES... DISCOVERIES THAT WOULD MAKE MY PRECIOUS DEAD SUSANNE RELIVE AGAIN! I DUG HER OUT OF THE COFFIN...PUT HER IN THE CART...

REST WELL INSIDE YOUR CRATE, DEAREST. IT WON'T BE LONG NOW!

I SET UP A PRIVATE LABORATORY IN A DESOLATE HOUSE AWAY FROM THE CITY. I TRANSFERRED SUSANNE'S BODY INTO A SPECIALLY-BUILT MORGUE...

YOU'RE NEVER MORE BEAUTIFUL--NOR MORE DESIRABLE!

NEXT I PUT MY THEORY INTO PRACTICE ...*MARCH 24*- AM TRYING HARD TO MASSAGE THE CIRCULATION ROUTES TO THE LEFT VENTRICLE...

NOTHING SEEMS TO BE HAPPENING! BUT I'VE GOT TO KEEP TRYING!

MARCH 25, 27, APRIL 14---SAME PROGRESS. SIMPLIFIED TECHNIQUES WITH STILL NO APPARENT RESULTS. PROGNOSIS UNCERTAIN. AM CONTINUING WITH REVIVIFICATION. HEART STOLID AND UNCHANGED...

PERHAPS MORE OXYGEN MAY TURN THE TRICK!

MAY 9--HAVE MODIFIED STIMULUS-CHARGES AND HAVE INSTITUTED A NEW VITALIZING PROCESS. THIS MAY PROVE TO BE THE CRUCIAL POINT!

BEGINNING TO *ACT* UP! YES...THERE'S A *DEFINITE* BEAT! *THE HEART...IS... ALIVE!*

MAY 11-- HAVE SET UP MY APPARATUS AND AM PROCEEDING TO START MY REPLACEMENT TECHNIQUE. HEART IS FRESH AND UNCHANGED. BEAT IS STRONGER AND CARDIOGRAM TEST SHOWS NO ABNORMAL ACTIVITY...

IT SEEMS TO BE... REDDER AND LARGER!

FOR NOW I HAD TAKEN OUT SUSANNES OWN SHATTERED AND DECAYED HEART AND ATTACHED THE MAIN BLOOD ROUTES TO THE CADAVER'S HEART. MAY 14--SUSANNE BREATHES!

HER CHEST...RISING AND FALLING... GOOD!

MAY 21--- HAVE ENLARGED THE BLOOD ROUTES TO INCLUDE ALL THE MINOR ARTERIES AND VEINS. ONLY LYMPH CHANNELS REMAIN UNATTACHED. HEART BEAT SEEMS TO BE INCREASING IN VOLUME--THOUGH IT MUST BE MY IMAGINATION OF COURSE...

CAN'T CONCENTRATE ON MY NOTES. HEARTBEAT LOUDER...

MAY 23--- THERE IS A DEFINITE PARALLEL BETWEEN THE HEART'S COLOR AND SUSANNE'S DEGREE OF REJUVENATION. THE REDDER THE HEART, THE CLOSER SUSANNE WILL BE TO LIFE! AM INCREASING VOLTAGE...

THUMP... THUMP!

IT'S TIME TO PLACE IT INSIDE SUSANNE'S BODY! THIS IS THE MOMENT!

MUST KEEP CALM. QUICKLY NOW--QUICKLY!

NOW I WAIT... WAIT FOR SUSANNE TO COME TO LIFE! AND SUDDENLY... AS I LOOK DOWN ON HER PEACEFUL FACE...
SUSANNE... SUSANNE...
I LOOK INTO HER EYES..THAT SHINE WITH DEATH. HER FACE IS EXPRESSIONLESS... MUTE... AS THOUGH LIFE ITSELF IS A HORROR...
SUSANNE... SPEAK! SAY... SOMETHING!
I BACKED AWAY FROM MY LOVER-CORPSE ...THE BEING WHO RELIVES IN DEATH. SUSANNE'S BEAUTY OVERWHELMED ME... AND I WAITED LONGINGLY... BREATHLESSLY... AS SHE TOOK SOME SLOW SHUFFLES TOWARD ME...
COME, DARLING! OH, COME!
NO... IT WAS NOT TO ME THAT SHE WAS WALKING. IT WAS TO SOMETHING... ELSE. IT WAS A CORPSE... FETID... EARTH-CRACKED... WITH ROTTED RED EYES... TOWARDS A MAN...
NO!
A DEAD CORPSE WITHOUT A HEART ... WHOSE ROTTED HANDS HELD SUSANNE IN A GESTURE OF LOVE...
IT--CAN'T--BE!!
HELPLESS AND HORRIFIED, I SEE TWO DEAD THINGS KISSING... TWO DECAYED THINGS TOUCHING LIPS OF LOVE...
I HEAR A SNAP. IT WAS MY BRAIN. BUT I KNOW WHAT I DID... KNOW WHAT HAPPENED...
SUZANNE... HAS... HIS... HEART...
...AND THE HEART STILL LOVES ITS BODY!
THE END